



CHRISTMAS EVE.

From the painting by Jan Steen in the Ryks Museum, Amsterdam.

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

EDITED BY

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STAGE VI

KING'S TREASURIES

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PREFACE

THE literary extract has sustained the fierce attacks of a whole generation of educationists and has emerged triumphant from the ordeal. Carefully selected and rightly used, it is one of the most effective intellectual and moral weapons in the teacher's armoury ; and I feel that no apology is necessary for the publication of another anthology of prose and verse designed to render help to young pupils who have been given the power to read, and who require definite guidance in the method and manner of using this valuable acquisition.

I have included in this volume a number of passages dealing with Nature topics, because I feel that we teachers, like the publishers of to-day, are inclined to overdo fiction in dealing with literature. Juvenile tastes differ widely, and some of our best pupils, who have little patience with the merely imaginative, revel in a well-written account of independent observations of the birds and animals, whose doings make such genuine appeal to all minds

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of the finest fibre. The spirit of these selections is well expressed by the words of Thoreau : " I once had a sparrow alight on my shoulder for a moment while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I was more distinguished by that circumstance than I should have been by any epaulette I could have worn."

This book also contains a number of short prose passages which might with advantage be memorised. I have great faith in the bracing moral and mental effect of these golden paragraphs which slip easily into the memory and are retained without effort, which, to compare great things with things still greater, serve the purpose to which Keble makes reference in his inspiring lines :

There are, in this loud stunning tide
 Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
 Of the everlasting chime,
Who carry music in their heart,
Through busy street and wrangling mart ;
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their secret souls a holier strain repeat.

One of the best of these passages is the short extract which I am permitted to print from Mr.

William Canton's *Child's Book of Saints*, and there are others in this volume which might be reverently committed to memory even if, for the moment, they are less than half understood.

I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Hardy for kind permission to use the extract from *Under the Greenwood Tree*; to Messrs. Methuen & Co. for the passage from Mr. Jack London's *White Fang*; to Messrs. Macmillan for the extracts from Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journals*, Mr. A. H. Norway's *Highways and Byways* in Yorkshire, the late Mr. Andrew Lang's translation of *Theocritus*, *Bion*, and *Moschus*, and Lord Redesdale's *Tales from Old Japan*; to Mr. John Lane and Mr. Kenneth Grahame for the selection from *The Golden Age*; to Mrs. C. E. Byles for R. S. Hawker's poem "The Holly"; to Miss Moira O'Neill for the poem "Grace for Light"; to Mr. Allen True and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for *The Trouble-Hunters*; to Mr. William Canton and Messrs. Dent for the extract from *A Child's Book of Saints*; to Messrs. Chatto & Windus for *Out of Doors in February* by Richard Jefferies; to Mr. P. R. Chalmers and the proprietors of *Punch* for the poem "Little Cow Hay"; and to the Editor of the *Westminster Gazette* for various kindnesses.

R. W.

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KINGS AND STATESMEN

THERE is a society continually open to us, of people who will talk to us as long as we like, whatever our rank or occupation ; —talk to us in the best words they can choose, and with thanks if we listen to them,—kings and statesmen lingering patiently in those plainly-furnished and narrow ante-rooms, our book-case shelves.

JOHN RUSKIN.

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

STAGE VI

EBENEZER SCROOGE

MARLEY was dead to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to.

Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind ! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadliest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile, and my unhallowed hands

shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead! Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral, and solemnised it with an undoubted bargain.

The mention of Marley's funeral brings me back to the point I started from. There is no doubt that Marley was dead. This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate. If we were not perfectly convinced that Hamlet's Father died before the play began, there would be nothing more remarkable in his taking a stroll at night, in an easterly wind, upon his own ramparts, than there would be in any other middle-aged gentleman rashly turning out after dark in a breezy spot—say Saint Paul's Churchyard, for instance—literally to astonish his son's weak mind.

Scrooge never painted out old Marley's name,

There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door—SCROOGE AND MARLEY. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names : it was all the same to him.

Oh ! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, Scrooge ! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner ! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire ; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait ; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue ; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him ; he iced his office in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he ; no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose ; no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain and snow and hail and sleet could boast

of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? when will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle; no children asked him what it was o'clock; no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him, and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts, and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones called "nuts" to Scrooge.

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather—foggy withal, and he could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement-stones to warm them.



CHARLES DICKENS.

The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already; it had not been light all day, and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room, and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter and tried to warm himself at the candle, in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly

that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.

" Bah ! " said Scrooge, " Humbug ! "

He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow ; his face was ruddy and handsome ; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.

" Christmas a humbug, uncle ! " said Scrooge's nephew. " You don't mean that, I am sure."

" I do, " said Scrooge. " Merry Christmas ! what right have you to be merry ? what reason have you to be merry ? You're poor enough."

" Come, then, " returned the nephew gaily ; " what right have you to be dismal ? what reason have you to be morose ? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said " Bah ! " again, and followed it up with " Humbug ! "

" Don't be cross, uncle, " said the nephew.

" What else can I be, " returned the uncle, " when I live in such a world of fools as this ? Merry Christmas ! Out upon merry Christmas ! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money ; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer ; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you ?

If I could work my will," said Scrooge, indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew, "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race

of creatures bound on other journeys. And, therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good ; and I say, God bless it ! ”

The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded. Becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever.

“ Let me hear another sound from *you*, ” said Scrooge, “ and you’ll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. You’re quite a powerful speaker, sir, ” he added, turning to his nephew. “ I wonder you don’t go into Parliament.”

“ Don’t be angry, uncle. Come ! Dine with us to-morrow.”

Scrooge said that he would see him hanged ; yes, indeed he did. He went the whole length of the expression, and said that he would see him in that extremity first.

“ But why ? ” cried Scrooge’s nephew. “ Why ? ”

“ Why did you get married ? ” said Scrooge.

“ Because I fell in love.”

“ Because you fell in love ! ” growled Scrooge, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. “ Good afternoon ! ”

“ Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me

before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?"

"Good afternoon," said Scrooge.

"I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?"

"I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So a Merry Christmas, Uncle!"

"Good afternoon," said Scrooge.

"And a Happy New Year!"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greetings of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge, for he returned them cordially.

"There's another fellow," muttered Scrooge, who overheard him. "My clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire him to Bedlam."

CHARLES DICKENS.

(*If you wish to find out how Scrooge was turned into a beneficent old gentleman, you must read the rest of the "Christmas Carol."*)

THE REAPERS OF LINDISFARNE

In his abbey cell St. Cuthbert
Sat burdened and care-dismayed,
For the wild Northumbrian people,
For whom he had wrought and prayed,
Still clung to their warlike pastime,
Their plunder and Border raid ;

Still scouted all peaceful tillage,
And queried with scowling brow,
“ Shall we who have won our victuals
By the stout, strong arm till now,
Forswearing the free, bold foray,
Crawl after the servile plough ? ”

“ Through year and through year have I taught them
By the word of my mouth,” he said,
“ And still, in their untamed rudeness,
They trust to the wilds for bread ;
But now will I teach henceforward
By the toil of my hands instead.

“ In their sight will I set the lesson ;
And, gazing across the tarn,
They shall see on its nether border
Garth, byre, and hurdled barn,

And the brave, fair field of barley
 That shall ripen at Lindisfarne."

Therewith from his Melrose cloister
 St. Cuthbert went his way ;
 He felled the hurst, and the meadow
 Bare him rich swathes of hay,
 And forth and aback in the furrow
 He wearied the longsome day.

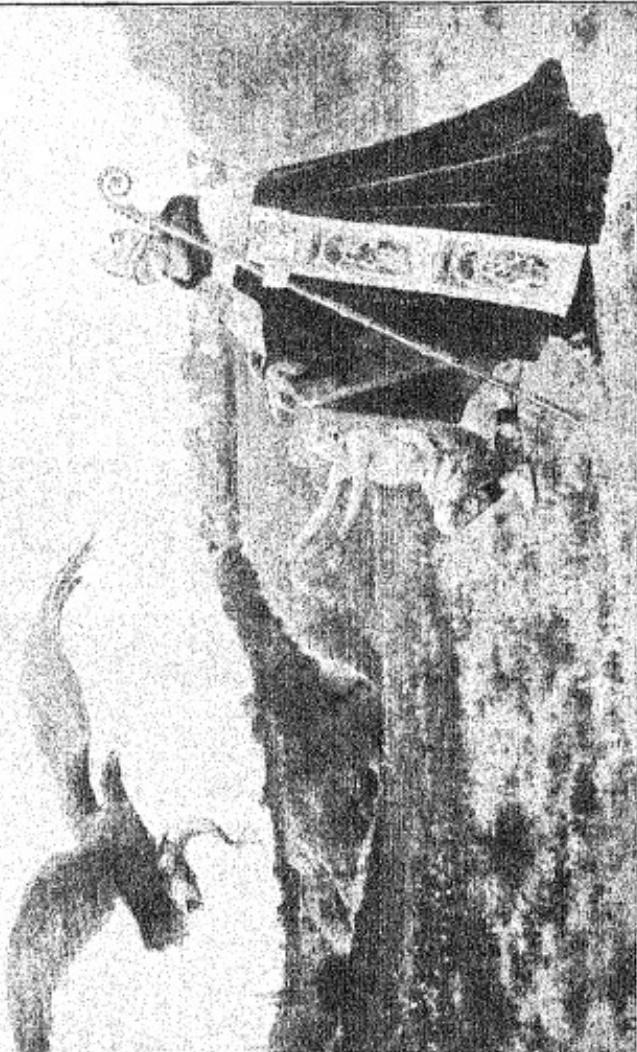
And it came to pass, when the Autumn
 The ground with its sear leaves strawed,
 And the purple was over the moorlands,
 And the rust on the sunburnt sod,
 That, ripe for the reaper, the barley
 Silvered the acres broad.

Then certain among the people,
 Fierce folk, who had laughed to scorn
 The work of the patient toiler
 While riot and hunt and horn
 Were wiling them into the greenwood,
 Cried : " Never Northumbrian born

 " Shall make of his sword a sickle,
 Or help to winnow the heap ;
 The hand that hath sowed may garner

A MIRACULOUS MEAL.

From the painting by Duez in the Musée de Luxembourg.



The grain as he list, or sleep,
 And pray the hard Lord whom he serveth
 That His angels may come and reap."

Right sadly St. Cuthbert listened,
 And, bowing his silvered head,
 He sought for a Christ-like patience
 As he lay on his rush-strewn bed,
 And strength for the morrow's scything,
 Till his fears and his sadness fled;

And he dreamed that he saw descending,
 On the marge of the moorland tarn,
 A circle of shining reapers,
 Who heaped in the low-eaved barn
 The sheaves that their gleaming sickles
 Had levelled at Lindisfarne.

In the cool of the crispy morning,
 Ere the lark had quitted her nest
 In the beaded grass, the sleeper
 Arose from his place of rest;
 "For," he sighed, "I must toil till the gloaming
 Is graying the golden west."

He turned to look at his corn-land,
 Did he dream? Did he see aright?

Close cut was the field of barley,
And the stubble stood thick in sight ;
For the reapers with shining sickles
Had harvested all the night.

MARGARET J. PRESTON.

THE LOVE-MASTER

As White Fang watched Weedon Scott approach, he bristled and snarled to advertise that he would not submit to punishment. Twenty-four hours had passed since he had slashed open the hand that was now bandaged and held up by a sling to keep the blood out of it. In the past White Fang had experienced delayed punishments, and he apprehended that such a one was about to befall him. How could it be otherwise ? He had committed what was to him sacrilege—sunk his fangs into the holy flesh of a god, and of a white-skinned superior god at that. In the nature of things, and of intercourse with gods, something terrible awaited him.

The god sat down several feet away. White Fang could see nothing dangerous in that. When the gods administered punishment they stood on their legs. Besides, this god had no club, no whip,

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no firearm. And furthermore, he himself was free. No chain nor stick bound him. He could escape into safety while the god was scrambling to his feet. In the meantime he would wait and see.

The god remained quiet, made no movement ; and White Fang's snarl slowly dwindled to a growl that ebbed down in his throat and ceased. Then the god spoke, and at the first sound of his voice the hair rose on White Fang's neck and the growl rushed up in his throat. But the god made no hostile movement, and went on calmly talking. For a time White Fang growled in unison with him, a correspondence of rhythm being established between growl and voice. But the god talked on interminably. He talked to White Fang as White Fang had never been talked to before. He talked softly and soothingly, with a gentleness that somehow, somewhere, touched White Fang. In spite of himself and all the pricking warnings of his instinct, White Fang began to have confidence in this god. He had a feeling of security that was belied by all his experience with men.

After a long time the god got up and went into the cabin. White Fang scanned him apprehensively when he came out. He had neither whip nor club nor weapon. Nor was his uninjured hand behind his back hiding something. He sat down as before,

Photo, H. C. Miller.

HOUNDS IN LEASH.

From the sculpture by Harry Bates.



in the same spot, several feet away. He held out a small piece of meat. White Fang pricked his ears and investigated it suspiciously, managing to look at the same time both at the meat and the god, alert for any overt act, his body tense and ready to spring away at the first sign of hostility.

Still the punishment delayed. The god merely held near to his nose a piece of meat. And about the meat there seemed nothing wrong. Still White Fang suspected ; and though the meat was proffered to him with short inviting thrusts of the hand, he refused to touch it. The gods were all-wise, and there was no telling what masterful treachery lurked behind that apparently harmless piece of meat. In past experience, especially in dealing with squaws, meat and punishment had often been disastrously related.

In the end, the god tossed the meat on the snow at White Fang's feet. He smelled the meat carefully, but he did not look at it. While he smelled it he kept his eyes on the god. Nothing happened. He took the meat into his mouth and swallowed it. Still nothing happened. The god was actually offering him another piece of meat. Again he refused to take it from the hand, and again it was tossed to him. This was repeated a number of times. But there came a time when the god refused to

toss it. He kept it in his hand and steadfastly proffered it.

The meat was good meat, and White Fang was hungry. Bit by bit, infinitely cautious, he approached the hand. At last the time came that he decided to eat the meat from the hand. He never took his eyes from the god, thrusting his head forward with ears flattened back and hair involuntarily rising and cresting on his neck. Also a low growl rumbled in his throat as warning that he was not to be trifled with. He ate the meat, and nothing happened. Piece by piece he ate all the meat, and nothing happened. Still the punishment delayed.

He licked his chops and waited. The god went on talking. In his voice was kindness—something of which White Fang had no experience whatever. And within him it aroused feelings which he had likewise never experienced before. He was aware of a certain strange satisfaction, as though some need were being gratified, as though some void in his being were being filled. Then again came the prod of his instinct and the warning of past experience. The gods were ever crafty, and they had unguessed ways of attaining their ends.

Ah, he had thought so! There it came now, the god's hand, cunning to hurt, thrusting out at him, descending upon his head. But the god went

on talking. His voice was soft and soothing. In spite of the menacing hand the voice inspired confidence. And in spite of the assuring voice the hand inspired distrust. White Fang was torn by conflicting feelings, impulses. It seemed he would fly to pieces, so terrible was the control he was exerting, holding together by an unwonted indecision the counter-forces that struggled within him for mastery.

He compromised. He snarled and bristled and flattened his ears. But he neither snapped nor sprang away. The hand descended. Nearer and nearer it came. It touched the ends of his upstanding hair. He shrank down under it. It followed down after him, pressing more closely against him. Shrinking, almost shivering, he still managed to hold himself together. It was a torment, this hand that touched him and violated his instinct. He could not forget in a day all the evil that had been wrought him at the hands of men. But it was the will of the god, and he strove to submit.

The hand lifted and descended again in a patting, caressing movement. This continued, but every time the hand lifted the hair lifted under it. And every time the hand descended the ears flattened down and a cavernous growl surged in his throat. White Fang growled and growled with insistent warning. By this means he announced that he was

prepared to retaliate for any hurt he might receive. There was no telling when the god's ulterior motive might be disclosed. At any moment that soft, confidence-inspiring voice might break forth in a roar of wrath, that gentle and caressing hand transform itself into a vice-like grip to hold him helpless and administer punishment.

But the god talked on softly, and ever the hand rose and fell with non-hostile pats. White Fang experienced dual feelings. It was distasteful to his instinct. It restrained him, opposed the will of him toward personal liberty. And yet it was not physically painful. On the contrary, it was even pleasant, in a physical way. The patting movement slowly and carefully changed to a rubbing of the ears about their bases, and the physical pleasure even increased a little. Yet he continued to fear, and he stood on guard, expectant of unguessed evil, alternately suffering and enjoying as one feeling or the other came uppermost and swayed him.

"Well, I'll be gosh-swoggled!"

So spoke Matt, coming out of the cabin, his sleeves rolled up, a pan of dirty dish-water in his hands, arrested in the act of emptying the pan by the sight of Weedon Scott patting White Fang.

At the instant his voice broke the silence White Fang leaped back, snarling savagely at him.

Matt regarded his employer with grieved disapproval.

"If you don't mind my expressin' my feelin's, Mr. Scott, I'll make free to say you're seventeen kinds of a fool, an' all of 'em different, an' then some."

Weedon Scott smiled with a superior air, gained his feet, and walked over to White Fang. He talked soothingly to him, but not for long, then slowly put out his hand, rested it on White Fang's head, and resumed the interrupted patting. White Fang endured it, keeping his eyes fixed suspiciously, not upon the man that petted him, but upon the man that stood in the doorway.

"You may be a number one tip-top minin' expert, all right, all right," the dog-musher delivered himself oracularly, "but you missed the chance of your life when you was a boy an' didn't run off an' join a circus."

White Fang snarled at the sound of his voice, but this time did not leap away from under the hand that was caressing his head and the back of his neck with long, soothing strokes.

It was the beginning of the end for White Fang—the ending of the old life and the reign of hate. A new and incomprehensively fairer life was dawning. It required much thinking and endless patience on

the part of Weedon Scott to accomplish this. And on the part of White Fang it required nothing less than a revolution. He had to ignore the urges and promptings of instinct and reason, defy experience, give the lie to life itself

JACK LONDON.

TO THE DANDELION

DEAR common flower, that grow'st beside the
way,

Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,

First pledge of blithesome May,

Which children pluck, and full of pride uphold,

High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,

Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth, thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,

Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;

'Tis the Spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike with lavish hand,

Though most hearts never understand

To take it at God's value, but pass by
 The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy ;
 To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime ;
 The eyes thou givest me
 Are in the heart, and heed not space or time :
 Not in mid-June the golden-cuirassed bee
 Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
 In the white lily's breezy tent,
 His fragrant Sybaris, than I when first
 From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
 Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
 Where, as the breezes pass,
 The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways ;
 Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
 Or whiten in the wind ; of waters blue
 That from the distance sparkle through
 Some woodland gap, and of a sky above
 Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth
 move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with
 thee ;
 The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,

Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth Nature seem
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art !
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

J. R. LOWELL.

SOME of the griefs you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived :
But what torments of pain you endured
From evils that never arrived !

Old French Verse.

THE DEFEAT OF TIME—A TALE OF
THE FAIRIES

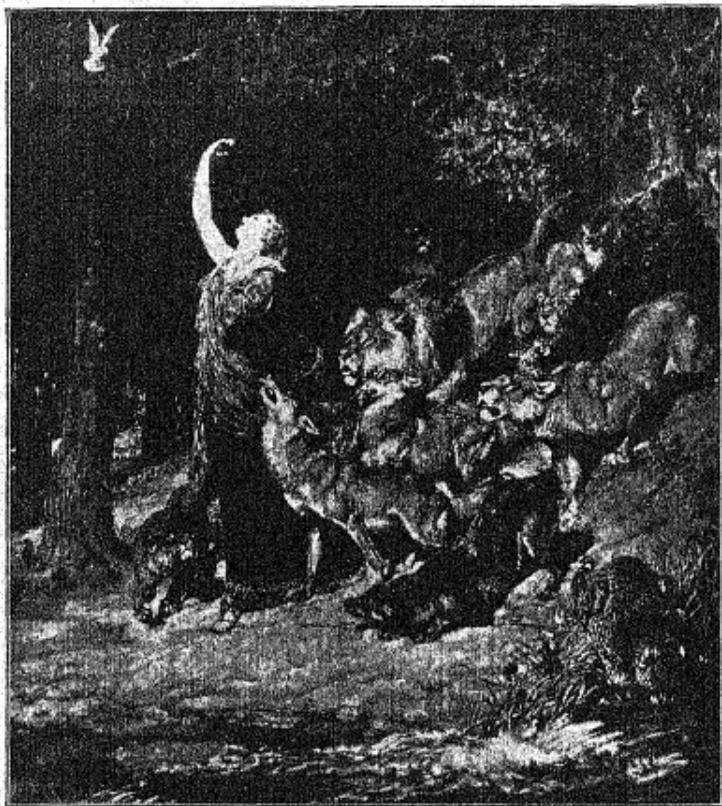
"If you believe," Peter shouted to them, "clap your hands; don't let Tink die." Many clapped. Some didn't. A few little beasts hissed.

Peter and Wendy.

TITANIA and her moonlight elves were assembled under the canopy of a huge oak, that served to shelter them from the moon's radiance, which, being now at her full moon, shot forth intolerable rays,—intolerable I mean to the subtle texture of their little shadowy bodies,—but dispensing an agreeable coolness to us grosser mortals.

An air of discomfort sate upon the queen and upon her courtiers. Their tiny friskings and gambols were forgot; and even Robin Goodfellow, for the first time in his little airy life, looked grave. For the queen had had melancholy forebodings of late, founded upon an ancient prophecy laid up in the records of Fairyland, that the date of fairy existence should be *then* extinct when men should cease to believe in them.

She knew how that the race of the Nymphs, which were her predecessors, and had been the guardians of the sacred floods, and of the silver fountains, and of the consecrated hills and woods, had utterly disappeared before the chilling touch



APHRODITE.

*From an engraving after Briton Rivière, R.A.
By permission of the Fine Art Society.*

of man's incredulity ; and she sighed bitterly at the approaching fate of herself and of her subjects, which was dependent upon so fickle a lease as the capricious and ever-mutable faith of man.

Then, as if to realise her fears, a melancholy shape came gliding in, and *that* was—Time, who with his intolerable scythe mows down kings and kingdoms ; at whose dread approach the fays huddled together as a flock of timorous sheep ; and the most courageous among them crept into acorn-cups, not enduring the sight of that ancientest of monarchs.

Titania's first impulse was to wish the presence of her false lord, King Oberon,—who was far away, in the pursuit of a strange beauty, a fay of Indian Land,—that with his good lance and sword, like a faithful knight and husband, he might defend her against Time. But she soon checked that thought as vain, for what could the prowess of the mighty Oberon himself, albeit the stoutest champion in Fairyland, have availed against so huge a giant, whose bald top touched the skies ?

So, in the mildest tone, she besought the spectre that in his mercy he would overlook and pass by her small subjects, as too diminutive and powerless to add any worthy trophy to his renown. And she besought him to employ his resistless strength against the ambitious children of men, and to lay waste their

aspiring works ; to tumble down their towers and turrets, and the Babels of their pride,—fit objects of his devouring scythe,—but to spare her and her harmless race, who had no existence beyond a dream ; frail objects of a creed that lived but in the faith of the believer.

And with her little arms, as well as she could, she grasped the stern knees of Time ; and, waxing speechless with fear, she beckoned to her chief attendants and maids of honour to come forth from their hiding-places, and to plead the plea of the fairies. And one of those small, delicate creatures came forth at her bidding, clad all in white like a chorister, and in a low melodious tone, not louder than the hum of a pretty bee, set forth her humble petition.

" We fairies," she said, " are the most inoffensive race that live, and least deserving to perish. It is we that have the care of all sweet melodies that no discords may offend the sun, who is the great soul of music. We rouse the lark at morn ; and the pretty Echoes, which respond to all the twittering choir, are of our making. Wherefore, great King of Years, if ever you have loved the music which is raining from a morning cloud sent from the messenger of day, the lark, as he mounts to heaven's gate, beyond the ken of mortals ; or if ever you have

listened with a charmed ear to the nightbird, that—

“ In the flowery spring,
Amidst the leaves set, makes the thickets ring
Of our sour sorrows, sweeten’d with her song ”—

spare our tender tribes, and we will muffle up the sheep-bell for thee, that thy pleasure take no interruption whenever thou shalt listen unto the nightingale.”

And Time answered, that “ he had heard that song too long. But, if she would know in what music Time delighted, it was, when sleep and darkness lay upon crowded cities, to hark to the midnight chime which is tolling from a hundred clocks, like the last knell over the soul of a dead world ; or to the crash of the fall of some age-worn edifice, which is as the voice of himself when he disparteth kingdoms.”

A second female fay took up the plea, and said, “ We be the handmaids of the Spring, and tend upon the birth of all sweet buds : and the pastoral cow-slips are our friends ; and the pansies and the violets, like nuns ; and the quaking harebell is in our wardship ; and the hyacinth, once a fair youth, and dear to Phœbus, the god of the sun.”

Then Time made answer, in his wrath striking the harmless ground with his hurtful scythe, that

"they must not think that he was one that cared for flowers, except to see them wither, and to take her beauty from the rose."

Next stood up a male fairy, clad all in green, like a forester or one of Robin Hood's mates, and, doffing his tiny cap, said, "We are small foresters, that live in woods, training the young boughs in graceful intricacies, with blue snatches of the sky between : we frame all shady roofs and arches rude ; and sometimes, when we are plying our tender hatchets, men say that the tapping woodpecker is nigh. And it is we that scoop the hollow cell of the squirrel, and carve quaint letters upon the rinds of trees, which in sylvan solitudes sweetly recall to the mind of the heat-oppressed swain, ere he lies down to slumber, the name of his fair one, dainty Aminta, gentle Rosalind, or chaste Laura, as it may happen."

Saturn, nothing moved with this courteous address, bade him begone, or "if he would be a woodman, to go forth and fell oak for the fairies' coffins which would forthwith be wanting. For himself he took no delight in haunting the woods, till their golden plumage (the yellow leaves) were beginning to fall, and leave the brown-black limbs bare, like Nature in her skeleton dress."

Then stood up one of those gentle fairies that are good to man, and blushed red as any rose

while he told a modest story of one of his own good deeds.

"It chanced upon a time," he said, "that while we were looking for cowslips in the meads, while yet the dew was hanging on the buds like beads, we found a babe left in its swathing-clothes—a little sorrowful, deserted thing.

"It was pity to see the abandoned little orphan left to the world's care by an unnatural mother. How the cold dew kept wetting its childish coats ; and its little hair, how it was bedabbled, that was like gossamer ! Its pouting mouth, unknowing how to speak, lay half-opened like a rose-lipped shell ; and its cheek was softer than any peach, upon which the tears, for very roundness, could not long dwell, but fell off, in clearness like pearls,—some on the grass, and some on his little hand ; and some haply wandered to the little dimpled well under his mouth, which Love himself seemed to have planned out, but less for tears than for smilings.

"Pity, it was, too, to see how the burning sun had scorched its helpless limbs ; for it lay without shade or shelter, or mother's breast, for foul weather or fair. So, having compassion on its sad plight, my fellows and I turned ourselves into grasshoppers, and swarmed about the babe, making such shrill cries as that pretty little chirping creature makes

in its mirth, till with our noise we attracted the attention of a passing rustic, a tender-hearted hind, who, wondering at our small but loud concert, strayed aside curiously, and found the babe, where it lay in the remote grass, and taking it up, lapped it in his russet coat, and bore it to his cottage, where his wife kindly nurtured it till it grew up a goodly personage.

" How this babe prospered afterwards, let proud London tell. This was that famous Sir Thomas Gresham, who was the chiefest of her merchants, the richest, the wisest. Witness his many goodly vessels on the Thames, freighted with costly merchandise, jewels from Ind, and pearls for courtly dames, and silks of Samarcand. And witness, more than all, that stately Bourse (or Exchange) which he caused to be built, a mart for merchants from east and west, whose graceful summit still bears, in token of the fairies' favours, his chosen crest, the grasshopper. And, like the grasshopper, may it please you, great king, to suffer us also to live, partakers of the green earth ! "

The fairy had scarce ended his plea, when a shrill cry, not unlike the grasshopper's, was heard. Poor Puck—or Robin Goodfellow, as he is sometimes called—had recovered a little from his first fright, and, in one of his mad freaks, had perched upon the

beard of old Time, which was flowing, ample, and majestic ; and was amusing himself with plucking at a hair, which was indeed so massy that it seemed to him that he was removing some huge beam of timber, rather than a hair : which Time, by some ill chance perceiving, snatched up the impish mischief with his great hand, and asked what it was.

" Alas ! " quoth Puck, " a little random elf am I, born in one of Nature's sports ; a very weed, created for the simple, sweet enjoyment of myself, but for no other purpose, worth, or need, that ever I could learn. 'Tis I that bob the angler's idle cork, till the patient man is ready to breathe a curse. I steal the morsel from the gossip's fork, or stop the sneezing chanter in mid psalm ; and when an infant has been born with hard or homely features, mothers say I changed the child at nurse : but to fulfil any graver purpose I have not wit enough, and hardly the will. I am a pinch of lively dust to frisk upon the wind : a tear would make a puddle of me ; and so I tickle myself with the lightest straw, and shun all griefs that might make me stagnant. This is my small philosophy."

Then Time, dropping him on the ground, as a thing too inconsiderable for his vengeance, grasped fast his mighty scythe : and now, not Puck alone, but the whole state of fairies, had gone to inevitable

wreck and destruction, had not a timely apparition interposed, at whose boldness Time was astounded ; for he came not with the habit of the forces of a deity, who alone might cope with Time, but as a simple mortal, clad as you might see a forester that hunts after wild conies by the cold moonshine ; or a stalker of stray deer, stealthy and bold.

But by the golden lustre in his eye, and the passionate wanness in his cheek, and by the fair and ample space of his forehead, which seemed a palace framed for the habitation of all glorious thoughts, he knew that this was his great rival, who had power given him to rescue whatsoever victims Time should clutch, and to cause them to live for ever in his immortal verse.

And, muttering the name of SHAKESPEARE, Time spread his roc-like wings, and fled the controlling presence ; and the liberated court of the fairies, with Titania at their head, flocked around the gentle ghost, giving him thanks, nodding to him, and doing him courtesies, who had crowned them henceforth with a permanent existence, to live in the minds of men, while verse shall have power to charm, or midsummer moons shall brighten.

CHARLES LAMB.

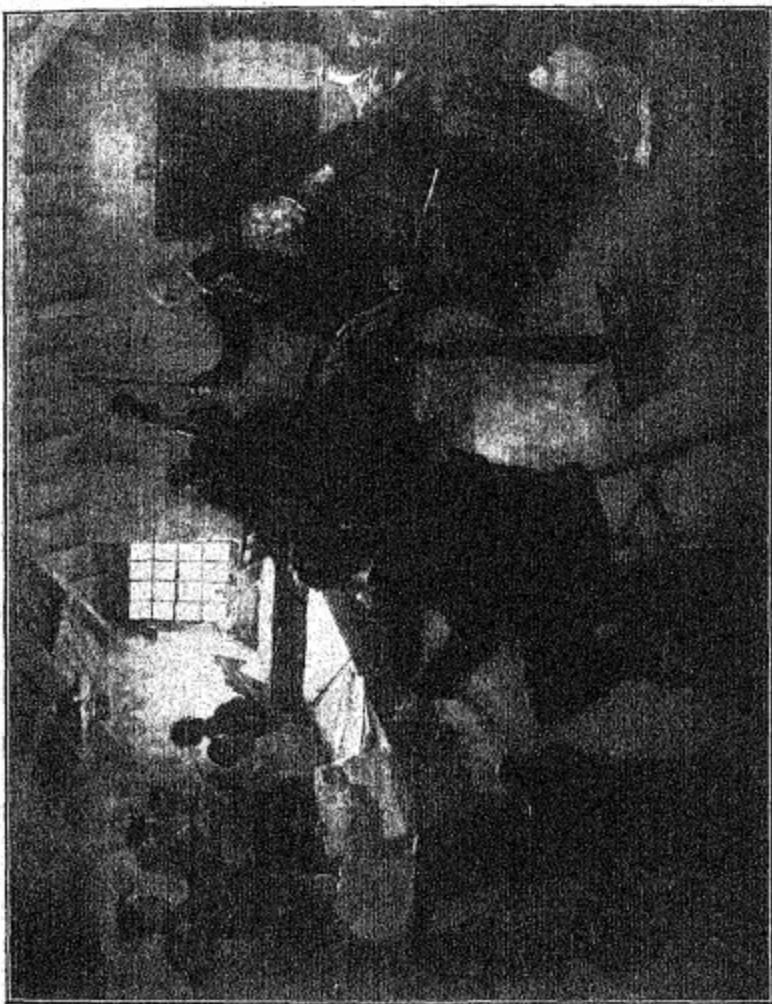
GOING THE ROUNDS

SHORTLY after ten o'clock, the singing-boys arrived at the tranter's house, which was invariably the place of meeting, and preparations were made for the start. The older men and musicians wore thick coats, with stiff perpendicular collars, and coloured handkerchiefs wound round and round the neck till the end came to hand, over all which they just showed their ears and noses, like people looking over a wall. The remainder, stalwart, ruddy men and boys, were mainly dressed in snow-white smock-frocks, embroidered upon the shoulders and breasts in ornamental forms of hearts, diamonds, and zigzags. The cider-mug was emptied for the ninth time, the music-books were arranged, and the pieces finally decided upon. The boys in the meantime put the old horn-lanterns in order, cut candles into short lengths to fit the lanterns ; and a thin fleece of snow having fallen since the early part of the evening, those who had no leggings went to the stable and wound wisps of hay round their ankles to keep the insidious flakes from the interior of their boots.

Mellstock was a parish of considerable acreage, the hamlets composing it lying at a much greater distance from each other than is ordinarily the case. Hence several hours were consumed in playing and

THE VILLAGE PHILHARMONIC.

From the painting by Stanislaus Forst. Reproduced by permission of the Art Gallery Committee of the Corporation of Birmingham.



singing within hearing of every family, even if but a single air were bestowed on each. There was Lower Mellstock, the main village ; half a mile from this were the church and vicarage and a few other houses, the spot being rather lonely now, though in past centuries it had been the most thickly populated quarter of the parish. A mile north-east lay the hamlet of Upper Mellstock where the tranter lived ; and at other points knots of cottages, besides solitary farmsteads and dairies.

Old William Dewy, with the violoncello, played the bass ; his grandson Dick the treble violin ; and Reuben and Michael Mail the tenor and second violins respectively. The singers consisted of four men and seven boys, upon whom devolved the task of carrying and attending to the lanterns, and holding the books open for the players. Directly music was the theme, old William ever and instinctively came to the front.

"Now mind, naibours," he said, as they all went out one by one at the door, he himself holding it ajar and regarding them with a critical face as they passed, like a shepherd counting out his sheep. "You two counter-boys, keep your ears open to Michael's fingering, and don't ye go straying into the treble part along o' Dick and his set, as ye did last year ; and mind this especially when we be in

'Arise, and hail.' Billy Chimlen, don't you sing quite so raving mad as you fain would ; and, all o' ye, whatever ye do, keep from making a great scuffle on the ground when we go in at people's gates ; but go quietly, so as to strike up all of a sudden, like spirits."

" Farmer Ledlow's first ? "

" Farmer Ledlow's first ; the rest as usual."

" And, Voss," said the tranter terminatively, "you keep house here till about half-past two ; then heat the metheglin and cider in the warmer you'll find turned up upon the copper ; and bring it wi' the victuals to church-hatch, as th'st know."

Just before the clock struck twelve they lighted the lanterns and started. The moon, in her third quarter, had risen since the snowstorm ; but the dense accumulation of snow-cloud weakened her power to a faint twilight, which was rather pervasive of the landscape than traceable to the sky. The breeze had gone down, and the rustle of their feet and tones of their speech echoed with an alert rebound from every post, boundary-stone, and ancient wall they passed, even where the distance of the echo's origin was less than a few yards. Beyond their own slight noises nothing was to be heard, save the occasional howl of foxes in the direction of Yalbury

Wood, or the brush of a rabbit among the grass now and then, as it scampered out of their way.

Most of the outlying homesteads and hamlets had been visited by about two o'clock ; they then passed across the outskirts of a wooded park toward the main village, nobody being at home at the Manor. Pursuing no recognized track, great care was necessary in walking lest their faces should come in contact with the low-hanging boughs of the old lime-trees, which in many spots formed dense overgrowths of interlaced branches.

"Times have changed from the times they used to be," said Mail, regarding nobody can tell what interesting old panoramas with an inward eye, and letting his outward glance rest on the ground because it was as convenient a position as any. "People don't care much about us now ! I've been thinking we must be almost the last left in the county of the old string players ? Barrel-organs, and the things next door to 'em that you blow wi' your foot, have come in terribly of late years."

"Ah!" said Bowman, shaking his head ; and old William, on seeing him, did the same thing.

"More's the pity," replied another. "Time was —long and merry ago now!—when not one of the varmits was to be heard of ; but it served some of the quires right. They should have stuck to strings

as we did, and keep out clarinets, and done away with serpents. If you'd thrive in musical religion, stick to strings, says I."

" Strings be safe soul-lifters, as far as that do go," said Mr. Spinks.

" Yet there's worse things than serpents," said Mr. Penny. " Old things pass away, 'tis true; but a serpent was a good old note: a deep rich note was the serpent."

" Clar'nets, however, be bad at all times," said Michael Mail. " One Christmas—years agone now, years—I went the rounds wi' the Weatherbury quire. 'Twas a hard frosty night, and the keys of all the clar'nets froze—ah, they did freeze!—so that 'twas like drawing a cork every time a key was opened; the players o' 'em had to go into a hedger-and-ditcher's chimley-corner, and thaw their clar'nets every now and then. An icicle hung down from the end of every man's clar'net a span long; and as to fingers—well, there, if ye'll believe me, we had no fingers at all, to our knowing."

" I can well bring back to my mind," said Mr. Penny, " what I said to poor Joseph Ryme (who took the treble part in Chalk-Newton Church for two-and-forty year), when they thought of having clar'nets there. ' Joseph,' I said, says I, ' depend upon't, if so be you have them tooting clar'nets you'll

spoil the whole set-out. Clar'nets were not made for the service of the Lord ; you can see it by looking at 'em,' I said. And what cam o't ? Why, souls, the parson set up a barrel-organ on his own account within two years o' the time I spoke, and the old quire went to nothing."

" As far as look is concerned," said the tranter, " I don't for my part see that a fiddle is much nearer heaven than a clar'net. 'Tis further off. There's always a rakish, scampish twist about a fiddle's looks that seems to say the Wicked One had a hand in making o' en ; while angels be supposed to play clar'nets in heaven, or som'at like 'em, if ye may believe picters."

" Robert Penny, you was in the right," broke in the eldest Dewy. " They should ha' stuck to strings." . . .

" Strings for ever ! " said little Jimmy.

" Strings alone would have held their ground against all the new-comers in creation." (" True, true ! " said Bowman.) " But clar'nets was death." (" Death they was ! " said Mr. Penny.) " And harmonions," William continued in a louder voice, and getting excited by these signs of approval, " harmonions and barrel-organs " (" Ah ! " and groans from Spinks) " be miserable—what shall I call 'em ?—miserable——"

"Sinners," suggested Jimmy, who made large strides like the men, and did not lag behind with the other little boys.

"Miserable dumbledores!"

"Right, William, and so they be—miserable dumbledores!" said the choir with unanimity.

By this time they were crossing to a gate in the direction of the school, which, standing on a slight eminence at the junction of three ways, now rose in unvarying and dark flatness against the sky. The instruments were retuned, and all the band entered the school enclosure, enjoined by old William to keep upon the grass.

"Number seventy-eight," he softly gave out, as they formed round in a semicircle, the boys opening the lanterns to get a clearer light, and directing their rays on the books.

Then passed forth into the quiet night an ancient and time-worn hymn, embodying a quaint Christianity in words orally transmitted from father to son through several generations down to the present characters, who sang them out right earnestly.

"Remember Adam's fall,
O thou Man :
Remember Adam's fall
From Heaven to Hell.

Remember Adam's fall ;
 How He hath condemn'd all
 In Hell perpetual
 There for to dwell.

Remember God's goodnessse,
 O thou Man :
 Remember God's goodnessse,
 His promise made.
 Remember God's goodnessse ;
 He sent His Son sinlesse
 Our ails for to redress,
 Be not afraid !

In Bethlehem He was born,
 O thou Man :
 In Bethlehem He was born,
 For mankind's sake.
 In Bethlehem He was born,
 Christmas-day i' the morn :
 Our Saviour thought no scorn
 Our faults to take.

Give thanks to God alway,
 O thou Man :
 Give thanks to God alway
 With heart-most joy.

Give thanks to God alway
On this our joyful day :
Let all men sing and say,
 Holy, Holy ! ”

Having concluded the last note, they listened for a minute or two, but found that no sound issued from the schoolhouse.

“Four breaths, and then, ‘O, what unbounded goodness ! ’ number fifty-nine,” said William.

This was duly gone through, and no notice whatever seemed to be taken of the performance.

“Good guide us, surely ‘tisn’t an empty house, as befell us in the year thirty-nine and forty-three ! ” said old Dewy.

“Perhaps she’s jist come from some musical city, and sneers at our doings,” the tranter whispered.

“ ‘Od rabbit her ! ” said Mr. Penny, with an annihilating look at a corner of the school chimney, “I don’t quite stomach her, if this is it. Your plain music well done is as worthy as your other sort done bad, ‘a b’lieve, souls ; so say I.”

“Four breaths, and then the last,” said the leader, authoritatively. “ ‘Rejoice, ye Tenants of the Earth,’ number sixty-four.”

At the close, waiting yet another minute, he said

in a clear, loud voice, as he had said in the village at that hour and season for the previous forty years : "A merry Christmas to ye!"

THOMAS HARDY.

(There is more about these simple-hearted country folks in "Under the Greenwood Tree.")

IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS

WHEN beginning to descend the hill towards Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry till evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful, and the figures of both of them, in grey plaids falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them ; but they answered us so sweetly that we were quite delighted, at the same time that they stared at us with an innocent look of wonder.

I think I never heard the English language sound more sweetly than from the mouth of the elder of these girls, while she stood at the gate answering our inquiries, her face flushed with the rain ; her pronunciation was clear and distinct ; without difficulty,



THE AYRSHIRE LASSIE.

After the painting by J. Faed. By permission of Messrs. Henry Graves & Co., Ltd.

yet slow, like that of a foreign speech. They told us we might sit in the ferry-house till the return of the boat, went in with us, and made a good fire as fast as possible to dry our wet clothes.

We learnt that the taller was the sister of the ferryman, and had been left in charge with the house for the day, that the other was his wife's sister, and was come with her mother on a visit—an old woman, who sate in a corner beside the cradle, nursing her little grandchild. We were glad to be housed, with our feet upon a warm hearthstone ; and our attendants were so active and good-humoured that it was pleasant to have to desire them to do anything. The younger was a delicate and unhealthy-looking girl ; but there was an uncommon meekness in her countenance, with an air of premature intelligence, which is often seen in sickly young persons. The other made me think of Peter Bell's "Highland Girl" :

As light and beauteous as a squirrel,
As beauteous and as wild !

She moved with unusual activity, which was chastened very delicately by a certain hesitation in her looks when she spoke, being able to understand us but imperfectly. They were both exceedingly desirous to get me what I wanted to make me

comfortable. I was to have a gown and petticoat of the mistress's, so they turned out her whole wardrobe upon the parlour floor, talking Erse to one another, and laughing all the time.

It was long before they could decide which of the gowns I was to have ; they chose at last, no doubt thinking that it was the best, a light-coloured sprigged cotton, with long sleeves, and they both laughed while I was putting it on, with the blue linsey petticoat, and one or the other, or both together, helped me to dress, repeating at least half a dozen times, " You never had on the like of that before."

When we entered the house we had been not a little glad to see a fowl stewing in barley-broth ; and now when the wettest of our clothes were stripped off, began again to recollect that we were hungry, and asked if we could have dinner. " Oh yes, ye may get that," the elder replied, pointing to the pan on the fire.

Conceive what a busy house it was—all our wet clothes to be dried, dinner prepared and set out for us four strangers, and a second cooking for the family ; add to this, two rough " callans," as they called them, boys about eight years old, were playing beside us ; the poor baby was fretful all the while ; the old woman sang dolefully Erse songs, rocking it in its cradle the more violently the more it cried ;

then there were a dozen cookings of porridge, and the baby could never be fed without the assistance of all three.

The hut was after the Highland fashion, but without anything beautiful except its situation ; the floor was rough, and wet with the rain that came in at the door, so that the lassies' bare feet were as wet as if they had been walking through street puddles, in passing from one room to another ; the windows were open, as at the other hut ; but the kitchen had a bed in it, and was much smaller, and the shape of the house was like that of a common English cottage, without its comfort ; yet there was no appearance of poverty—indeed, quite the contrary. The peep out of the open door-place across the lake made some amends for the want of the long roof and elegant rafters of our boatman's cottage, and all the while the waterfall, which we could not see, was roaring at the end of the hut, which seemed to serve as a sounding-board for its noise, so that it was not unlike sitting in a house where a mill is going. The dashing of the waves against the shore could not be distinguished ; yet in spite of my knowledge of this I could not help fancying that the tumult and storm came from the lake, and went out several times to see if it was possible to row over in safety.

After long waiting we grew impatient for our dinner ; at last the pan was taken off, and carried into the other room ; but we had to wait at least another half-hour before the ceremony of dishing-up was completed ; yet with all this bustle and difficulty, the manner in which they, and particularly the elder of the girls, performed everything, was perfectly graceful.

We ate a hearty dinner, and had time to get our clothes quite dry before the arrival of the boat. The girls could not say at what time it would be at home ; on our asking them if the church was far off they replied, "Not very far" ; and when we asked how far, they said, "Perhaps about four or five miles." I believe a Church of England congregation would hold themselves excused for non-attendance three parts of the year, having but half as far to go ; but in the lonely parts of Scotland they make little of a journey of nine or ten miles to a preaching. They have not perhaps an opportunity of going more than once in a quarter of a year, and, setting piety aside, have other motives to attend : they hear the news, public and private, and see their friends and neighbours ; for though the people who meet at these times may be gathered together from a circle of twenty miles' diameter, a sort of neighbourly connection must be so brought about. There is

something exceedingly pleasing to my imagination in this gathering together of the inhabitants of these secluded districts—for instance, the borderers of these two large lakes meeting at the deserted garrison which I have described. The manner of their travelling is on foot, on horseback, and in boats across the waters—young and old, rich and poor, all in their best dress.

If it were not for these Sabbath-day meetings one summer month would be like another summer month, one winter month like another—detached from the goings-on of the world, and solitary throughout; from the time of earliest childhood they will be like landing-places in the memory of a person who has passed his life in these thinly-peopled regions; they must generally leave distinct impressions, differing from each other so much as they do in circumstances, in time and place, etc.—some in the open fields, upon hills, in houses, under large rocks, in storms, and in fine weather.

But I have forgotten the fireside of our hut. After long waiting, the girls, who had been on the look-out, informed us that the boat was coming. I went to the water-side, and saw a cluster of people on the opposite shore, but being yet at a distance, they looked more like soldiers surrounding a carriage than a group of men and women; red and green

were the distinguishable colours. We hastened to get ourselves ready as soon as we saw the party approach, but had longer to wait than we expected, the lake being wider than it appears to be. As they drew near we could distinguish men in tartan plaids, women in scarlet cloaks, and green umbrellas by the half-dozen. The landing was as pretty a sight as ever I saw. The bay, which had been so quiet two days before, was all in motion with small waves, while the swollen waterfall roared in our ears. The boat came steadily up, being pressed almost to the water's edge by the weight of its cargo ; perhaps twenty people landed, one after another. It did not rain much, but the women held up their umbrellas ; they were dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, and, with their scarlet cardinals, the tartan plaids of the men, and Scotch bonnets, made a gay appearance. There was a joyous bustle surrounding the boat, which even imparted something of the same character to the waterfall in its tumult, and the restless grey waves ; the young men laughed and shouted, the lassies laughed, and the elder folks seemed to be in a bustle to be away. I remember with what haste the mistress of the house where we were ran up to seek after her child, and seeing us, how anxiously and kindly she inquired how we had fared, if we had had a good fire, had been well waited

upon, etc. etc. All this in three minutes--for the boatman had another party to bring from the other side, and hurried us off.

The hospitality we had met with at the two cottages and Mr. Macfarlane's gave us very favourable impressions on this our first entrance into the Highlands, and at this day the innocent merriment of the girls, with their kindness to us, and the beautiful figure and face of the elder, come to my mind whenever I think of the ferry-house and waterfall of Loch Lomond ; and I never think of the two girls but the whole image of that romantic spot is before me, a living image, as it will be to my dying day. The following poem was written by William not long after our return from Scotland :

Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay ; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem

Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !
Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart ;
God shield thee to thy latest years !
I neither know thee nor thy peers ;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away :
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness ;
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer :
A face with gladness overspread !
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings

upon, etc. etc. All this in three minutes—for the boatman had another party to bring from the other side, and hurried us off.

The hospitality we had met with at the two cottages and Mr. Macfarlane's gave us very favourable impressions on this our first entrance into the Highlands, and at this day the innocent merriment of the girls, with their kindness to us, and the beautiful figure and face of the elder, come to my mind whenever I think of the ferry-house and waterfall of Loch Lomond ; and I never think of the two girls but the whole image of that romantic spot is before me, a living image, as it will be to my dying day. The following poem was written by William not long after our return from Scotland :

Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay ; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem

Like something fashioned in a dream ;
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Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
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And maidenly shamefacedness ;
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer :
A face with gladness overspread !
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings

Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech :
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life !
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful ?
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father—anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.

In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
I feel this place was made for her ;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

We were rowed over speedily by the assistance of two youths, who went backwards and forwards for their own amusement, helping at the oars, and pulled as if they had strength and spirits to spare for a year to come. We noticed that they had uncommonly fine teeth, and that they and the boatman were very handsome people. Another merry crew took our place in the boat.

We had three miles to walk to Tarbet. It rained, but not heavily ; the mountains were not concealed from us by the mists, but appeared larger and more grand ; twilight was coming on, and the obscurity under which we saw the objects, with the sounding

of the torrents, kept our minds alive and wakeful ; all was solitary and huge—sky, water, and mountains mingled together. While we were walking forward, the road leading us over the top of a brow, we stopped suddenly at the sound of a half-articulate Gaelic hooting from the field close to us. It came from a little boy, whom we could see on the hill between us and the lake, wrapped up in a grey plaid. He was probably calling home the cattle for the night. His appearance was in the highest degree moving to the imagination : mists were on the hill-sides, darkness shutting in upon the huge avenue of mountains, torrents roaring, no house in sight to which the child might belong ; his dress, cry, and appearance all different from anything we had been accustomed to. It was a text, as William has since observed to me, containing in itself the whole history of the Highlander's life—his melancholy, his simplicity, his poverty, his superstition, and above all, that visionariness which results from a communion with the unworldliness of nature.

When we reached Tarbet the people of the house were anxious to know how we had fared, particularly the girl who had waited upon us. Our praises of Loch Ketterine made her exceedingly happy, and she ventured to say, of which we had heard not a word before, that it was “ bonnier to *her* fancy than

Loch Lomond." The landlord, who was not at home when we had set off, told us that if he had known of our going he would have recommended us to Mr. Macfarlane's or the other farmhouse, adding that they were hospitable people in that vale. Coleridge and I got tea, and William and the drawing-master chose supper; they asked to have a broiled fowl, a dish very common in Scotland, to which the mistress replied, "Would not a boiled one do as well?" They consented, supposing that it would be more easily cooked; but when the fowl made its appearance, to their great disappointment it proved a cold one that had been stewed in the broth at dinner.

(*This was written by Dorothy Wordsworth, the sister of William Wordsworth, the poet, and more of her simple, charming descriptions can be read in her "Journals."*)



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

WINGS

I

WINGS have we,—and as far as we can go,
We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we
know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear ;
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—
The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

II

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I



Photo, Frederick Hollyer.

UNA AND SAINT GEORGE.

From the painting by G. F. Watts, R.A.

Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought :

And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

W. WORDSWORTH.

FROM LONDON TO STONEHENGE

IN about two hours I had cleared the great city, and got beyond the suburban villages, or rather towns, in the direction in which I was travelling ; I was in a broad and excellent road, leading I knew not whither. I now slackened my pace, which had hitherto been great. Presently, coming to a milestone on which was graven nine miles, I rested against it, and looking round towards the vast city, which had long ceased to be visible, I fell into a train of meditation.

I thought of all my ways and doings since the days of my first arrival in that vast city—I had worked

and toiled, and, though I had accomplished nothing at all commensurate with the hopes which I had entertained previous to my arrival, I had achieved my own living, preserved my independence, and become indebted to no one. I was now quitting it, poor in purse, it is true, but not wholly empty ; rather ailing, it may be, but not broken in health ; and, with hope within my bosom, had I not cause upon the whole to be thankful ? Truly, yes !

My meditation over, I left the milestone and proceeded on my way in the same direction as before until the night began to close in. I had always been a good pedestrian, but now, whether owing to indisposition or to not having for some time past been much in the habit of taking such lengthy walks, I began to feel not a little weary.

Just as I was thinking of putting up for the night at the next inn or public-house I should arrive at, I heard what sounded like a coach coming up rapidly behind me. Induced, perhaps, by the weariness which I felt, I stopped and looked wistfully in the direction of the sound ; presently up came a coach, seemingly a mail, drawn by four bounding horses—there was no one upon it but the coachman and the guard ; when nearly parallel with me it stopped.

“Want to get up ?” sounded a voice, in the true coachman - like tone—half querulous, half

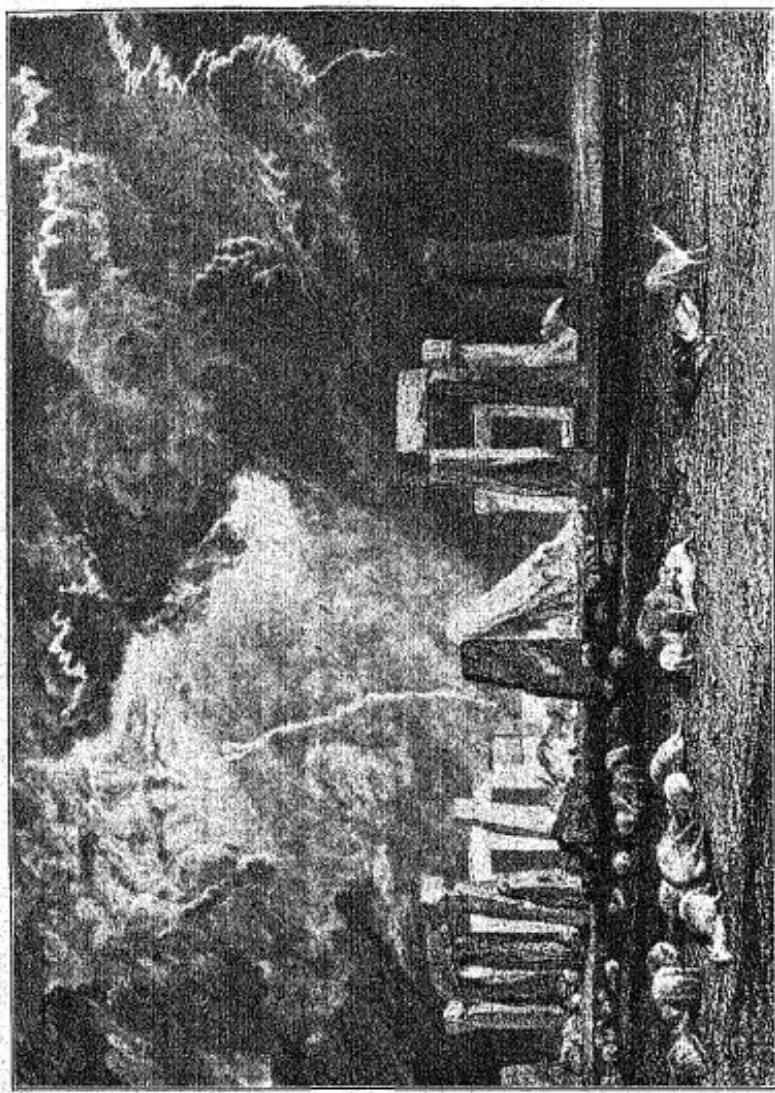
authoritative. I hesitated ; I was tired, it is true, but I had left London bound on a pedestrian excursion, and I did not much like the idea of having recourse to a coach after accomplishing so very inconsiderable a distance. "Come, we can't be staying here all night," said the voice, more sharply than before. "I can ride a little way, and get down whenever I like," thought I ; and springing forward I clambered up the coach, and was going to sit down upon the box, next the coachman.

"No, no," said the coachman, who was a man about thirty, with a hooked nose and red face, dressed in a fashionably cut great-coat, with a fashionable black beaver on his head. "No, no, keep behind—the box a'n't for the like of you," said he, as he drove off ; "the box is for lords, or gentlemen at least."

I made no answer. "Hang that off-hand leader," said the coachman, as the right-hand front horse made a desperate start at something he saw in the road ; and, half rising, he with great dexterity hit with his long whip the off-hand leader a cut on the off cheek. "These seem to be fine horses," said I. The coachman made no answer. "Nearly thoroughbred," I continued ; the coachman drew his breath, with a kind of hissing sound, through his teeth. "Come, young fellow, none of your chaff. Don't

STONEHENGE.

From the picture by J. M. W. Turner, R.A.



you think, because you ride on my mail, I'm going to talk to you about 'orses. I talk to nobody about 'orses except lords." "Well," said I, "I have been called a lord in my time." "It must have been by a thimble-rigger, then," said the coachman, bending back, and half turning his face round with a broad leer. "You have hit the mark wonderfully," said I. "You coachmen, whatever else you may be, are certainly no fools." "We a'n't, a'n't we?" said the coachman. "There you are right; and, to show you that you are, I'll now trouble you for your fare. If you have been amongst the thimble-riggers you must be tolerably well cleared out. Where are you going?—to——? I think I have seen you there. The fare is sixteen shillings. Come, tip us the blunt; them that has no money can't ride on my mail."

Sixteen shillings was a large sum, and to pay it would make a considerable inroad on my slender finances; I thought, at first, that I would say I did not want to go so far; but then the fellow would ask at once where I wanted to go, and I was ashamed to acknowledge my utter ignorance of the road. I determined, therefore, to pay the fare, with a tacit determination not to mount a coach in future without knowing whither I was going. So I paid the man the money, who, turning round, shouted to

the guard—"All right, Jem; got fare to——," and forthwith whipped on his horses, especially the off-hand leader, for whom he seemed to entertain a particular spite, to greater speed than before—the horses flew.

A young moon gave a feeble light, partially illuminating a line of road which, appearing by no means interesting, I the less regretted having paid my money for the privilege of being hurried along it in the flying vehicle. We frequently changed horses; and at last my friend the coachman was replaced by another, the very image of himself—hawk nose, red face, with narrow-rimmed hat and fashionable overcoat. After he had driven about fifty yards, the new coachman fell to whipping one of the horses. "Hang this near-hand wheeler," said he, "the brute has got a corn." "Whipping him won't cure him of his corn," said I. "Who told you to speak?" said the driver, with an oath; "mind your own business; 'tisn't from the like of you I am to learn to drive 'orses."

Presently I fell into a broken kind of slumber. In an hour or two I was aroused by a rough voice—"Got to——, young man; get down if you please." I opened my eyes—there was a dim and indistinct light, like that which precedes dawn; the coach was standing still in something like a street; just

below me stood the guard. "Do you mean to get down," said he, "or will you keep us here till morning? other fares want to get up." Scarcely knowing what I did, I took my bundle and stick and descended, whilst two people mounted. "All right, John," said the guard to the coachman, springing up behind; whereupon off whisked the coach, one or two individuals who were standing by disappeared, and I was left alone.

After standing still a minute or two, considering what I should do, I moved down what appeared to be the street of a small straggling town; presently I passed by a church, which rose indistinctly on my right hand; anon there was the rustling of foliage and the rushing of waters. I reached a bridge, beneath which a small stream was running in the direction of the south. I stopped and leaned over the parapet, for I have always loved to look upon streams, especially at the still hours. "What stream is this, I wonder?" said I, as I looked down from the parapet into the water, which whirled and gurgled below.

Leaving the bridge, I ascended a gentle acclivity, and presently reached what appeared to be a tract of moory undulating ground. It was now tolerably light, but there was a mist or haze abroad which

prevented my seeing objects with much precision. I felt chill in the damp air of the early morn, and walked rapidly forward. In about half an hour I arrived where the road divided into two, at an angle or tongue of dark green sward. "To the right or the left?" said I, and forthwith took, without knowing why, the left-hand road, along which I proceeded about a hundred yards, when, in the midst of the tongue of sward formed by the two roads, collaterally with myself, I perceived what I at first conceived to be a small grove of blighted trunks of oaks, barked and grey.

I stood still for a moment, and then, turning off the road, advanced slowly towards it over the sward ; as I drew nearer, I perceived that the objects which had attracted my curiosity, and which formed a kind of circle, were not trees, but immense upright stones. A thrill pervaded my system ; just before me were two, the mightiest of the whole, tall as the stems of proud oaks, supporting on their tops a huge transverse stone, and forming a wonderful doorway. I knew now where I was, and, laying down my stick and bundle, and taking off my hat, I advanced slowly, and cast myself—it was folly, perhaps, but I could not help what I did—cast myself, with my face on the dewy earth, in the middle of the portal of giants, beneath the transverse stone.

The spirit of Stonehenge was strong upon me !

And after I had remained with my face on the ground for some time, I arose, placed my hat on my head, and, taking up my stick and bundle, wandered around the wondrous circle, examining each individual stone, from the greatest to the least ; and then, entering by the great door, seated myself upon an immense broad stone, one side of which was supported by several small ones, and the other slanted upon the earth ; and there in deep meditation, I sat for an hour or two, till the sun shone in my face above the tall stones of the eastern side.

And as I still sat there, I heard the noise of bells, and presently a large number of sheep came browsing past the circle of stones ; two or three entered, and grazed upon what they could find, and soon a man also entered the circle at the northern side.

"Early here, sir," said the man, who was tall, and dressed in a dark green slop, and had all the appearance of a shepherd ; "a traveller, I suppose ? "

"Yes," said I, "I am a traveller ; are these sheep yours ? "

"They are, sir ; that is, they are my master's. A strange place this, sir," said he, looking at the stones ; "ever here before ? "

"Never in body, frequently in mind."

" Heard of the stones, I suppose ; no wonder—all the people of the plain talk of them."

" What do the people of the plain say of them ? "

" Why, they say—How did they ever come here ? "

" Do they not suppose them to have been brought ? "

" Who should have brought them ? "

" I have read that they were brought by many thousand men."

" Where from ? "

" Ireland."

" How did they bring them ? "

" I don't know."

" And what did they bring them for ? "

" To form a temple, perhaps."

" What is that ? "

" A place to worship God in."

" A strange place to worship God in."

" Why ? "

" It has no roof."

" Yes, it has."

" Where ? " said the man, looking up.

" What do you see above you ? "

" The sky."

" Well ? "

" Well ! "

"Have you anything to say?"

"How did these stones come here?"

"Are there other stones like these on the plains?"

said I.

"None; and yet there are plenty of strange things on these downs."

"What are they?"

"Strange heaps, and barrows, and great walls of earth built on the tops of hills."

"Do the people of the plain wonder how they came there?"

"They do not."

"Why?"

"They were raised by hands."

"And these stones?"

"How did they ever come here?"

"I wonder whether they are here?" said I.

"These stones?"

"Yes."

"So sure as the world," said the man; "and, as the world, they will stand as long."

"I wonder whether there is a world."

"What do you mean?"

"An earth and sea, moon and stars, sheep and men."

"Do you doubt it?"

"Sometimes."

" I never heard it doubted before."

" It is impossible there should be a world."

" It a'n't possible there shouldn't be a world."

" Just so." At this moment a fine ewe, attended by a lamb, rushed into the circle and fondled the knees of the shepherd. " I suppose you would not care to have some milk," said the man.

" Why do you suppose so ? "

" Because, so be, there be no sheep, no milk, you know ; and what there ben't is not worth having."

" You could not have argued better," said I ; " that is, supposing you have argued ; with respect to the milk you may do as you please."

" Be still, Nanny," said the man ; and producing a tin vessel from his scrip, he milked the ewe into it. " Here is milk of the plains, master," said the man, as he handed the vessel to me.

" Where are those barrows and great walls of earth you were speaking of," said I, after I had drunk some of the milk ; " are there any near where we are ? "

" Not within many miles ; the nearest is yonder away," said the shepherd, pointing to the south-east. " It's a grand place, that, but not like this ; quite different, and from it you have a sight of the finest spire in the world."

" I must go to it," said I, and I drank the remainder of the milk ; " yonder, you say."

"Yes, yonder ; but you cannot get to it in that direction, the river lies between."

"What river ? "

"The Avon."

"Avon is British," said I.

"Yes," said the man, "we are all British here."

"No, we are not," said I.

"What are we then ? "

"English."

"A'n't they one ? "

"No."

"Who were the British ? "

"The men who are supposed to have worshipped God in this place, and who raised these stones."

"Where are they now ? "

"Our forefathers slaughtered them, spilled their blood all about, especially in this neighbourhood, destroyed their pleasant places, and left not, to use their own words, one stone upon another."

"Yes, they did," said the shepherd, looking aloft at the transverse stone.

"And it is well for them they did ; whenever that stone, which English hands never raised, is by English hands thrown down, woe, woe, woe to the English race ; spare it, English ! Hengist spared it !—Here is sixpence."

"I won't have it," said the man.

" Why not ? "

" You talk so prettily about these stones ; you seem to know all about them."

" I never receive presents ; with respect to the stones, I say with yourself, How did they ever come here ? "

" How did they ever come here ? " said the shepherd.

GEORGE BORROW.

(*This passage is from the author's " Lavengro. "*)

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

IN ancient times, as story tells,
The saints would often leave their cells,
And stroll about, but hide their quality,
To try good people's hospitality.

It happened on a winter night,
As authors of the legend write,
Two brother hermits, saints by trade,
Taking their tour in masquerade,
Disguised in tattered habits went
To a small village down in Kent ;
Where, in the stroller's canting strain,

They begged from door to door in vain,
Tried every tone might pity win ;
But not a soul would take them in.

Our wandering saints, in woeful state,
Treated at this ungodly rate,
Having through all the village past,
To a small cottage came at last,
Where dwelt a good old honest yeoman,
Called in the neighbourhood Philemon ;
Who kindly did these saints invite
In his poor hut to pass the night ;
And then the hospitable sire
Bid goody Baucis mend the fire ;
While he from out the chimney took
A flitch of bacon off the hook,
And freely from the fattest side
Cut out large slices to be fried ;
Then stepped aside to fetch them drink,
Filled a large jug up to the brink,
And saw it fairly twice go round ;
Yet (what is wonderful !) they found
'Twas still replenished to the top,
As if they ne'er had touched a drop.
The good old couple were amazed,
And often on each other gazed ;
For both were frightened to the heart,
And just began to cry, " What ar't ! "

Then softly turned aside to view
Whether the lights were burning blue.
" Good folks, you need not be afraid,
We are but saints," the hermits said ;
" No hurt shall come to you or yours :
But for that pack of churlish boors,
Not fit to live on Christian ground,
They and their houses shall be drowned ;
Whilst you shall see your cottage rise,
And grow a church before your eyes."

They scarce had spoke when, fair and soft,
The roof began to mount aloft,
Aloft rose every beam and rafter,
The heavy wall climbed slowly after ;
The chimney widened and grew higher,
Became a steeple with a spire.

The kettle to the top was hoist,
And there stood fastened to a joist ;
Doomed ever in suspense to dwell,
'Tis now no kettle, but a bell.

A wooden jack which had almost
Lost by disuse the art to roast,
A sudden alteration feels,
Increased by new intestine wheels ;
The jack and chimney, near allied,
Had never left each other's side :
The chimney to a steeple grown,

The jack would not be left alone ;
But up against the steeple reared,
Became a clock, and still adhered.

The groaning chair began to crawl,
Like a huge snail, along the wall ;
There stuck aloft in public view,
And with small change a pulpit grew.

The cottage, by such feats as these,
Grown to a church by just degrees,
The hermits then desired the host
To ask for what he fancied most.
Philemon, having paused awhile,
Returned them thanks in homely style :
“ I’m old, and fain would live at ease ;
Make me the parson, if you please.”

Thus happy in their change of life
Were several years this man and wife.
When on a day, which proved their last,
Discoursing on old stories past,
They went by chance, amidst their talk,
To the churchyard to take a walk ;
When Baucis hastily cried out,
“ My dear, I see your forehead sprout ! ”
“ Sprout ! ” quoth the man ; “ what’s this you
tell us ?

I hope you don’t believe me jealous !
But yet, methinks, I feel it true ;

And really yours is budding too—
Nay, now I cannot stir my foot ;
It feels as if 'twere taking root."
Description would but tire my muse ;
In short, they both were turned to yews.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

MISS MATTY AS SHOP-KEEPER

MISS MATTY's sale went off famously. She retained the furniture of her sitting-room and bedroom, the former of which she was to occupy till Martha could meet with a lodger who might wish to take it ; and into this sitting-room and bedroom she had to cram all sorts of things, which were (the auctioneer assured her) bought in for her at the sale by an unknown friend. I always suspected Mrs. Fitz-Adam of this ; but she must have had an accessory who knew what articles were particularly regarded by Miss Matty on account of their associations with her early days. The rest of the house looked rather bare, to be sure ; all except one tiny bedroom, of which my father allowed me to purchase the furniture for my occasional use in case of Miss Matty's illness.

I had expended my own small store in buying all manner of comfits and lozenges, in order to tempt

the little people whom Miss Matty loved so much to come about her. Tea in bright green canisters, and comfits in tumblers—Miss Matty and I felt quite proud as we looked round us on the evening before the shop was to be opened. Martha had scoured the boarded floor to a white cleanliness, and it was adorned with a brilliant piece of oilcloth, on which customers were to stand before the table-counter. The wholesome smell of whitewash and plaster pervaded the apartment. A very small “Matilda Jenkyns, licensed to sell tea,” was hidden under the lintel of the new door, and two boxes of tea, with cabalistic inscriptions all over them, stood ready to disgorge their contents into the canisters.

Miss Matty, as I ought to have mentioned before, had had some scruples of conscience at selling tea when there was already Mr. Johnson in the town, who included it among his numerous commodities ; and before she could quite reconcile herself to the adoption of her new business, she had trotted down to his shop, unknown to me, to tell him of the project that was thus entertained, and to inquire if it was likely to injure his business. My father called this idea of hers “great nonsense,” and “wondered how tradespeople were to get on if there was to be a continual consulting of each other’s interests, which would put a stop to all competition



directly." And, perhaps, it would not have done in Drumble, but in Cranford it answered very well ; for not only did Mr. Johnson kindly put at rest all Miss Matty's scruples and fear of injuring his business, but I have reason to know he repeatedly sent customers to her, saying that the teas he kept were of a common kind, but that Miss Jenkyns had all the choice sorts. And expensive tea is a very favourite luxury with well-to-do tradespeople and rich farmers' wives, who turn up their noses at the Congou and Souchong prevalent at many tables of gentility, and will have nothing else than Gunpowder and Pekoe for themselves.

But to return to Miss Matty. It was really very pleasant to see how her unselfishness and simple sense of justice called out the same good qualities in others. She never seemed to think any one would impose upon her, because she should be so grieved to do it to them. I have heard her put a stop to the asseverations of the man who brought her coals by quietly saying, "I am sure you would be sorry to bring me wrong weight"; and if the coals were short measure that time, I don't believe they ever were again. People would have felt as much ashamed of presuming on her good faith as they would have done on that of a child. But my father says, "such simplicity might be very well in

Cranford, but would never do in the world." And I fancy the world must be very bad, for with all my father's suspicion of every one with whom he has dealings, and in spite of all his many precautions, he lost upwards of a thousand pounds by roguery only last year.

I just stayed long enough to establish Miss Matty in her new mode of life, and to pack up the library, which the rector had purchased. He had written a very kind letter to Miss Matty, saying, "how glad he should be to take a library, so well selected as he knew that the late Mr. Jenkyns's must have been, at any valuation put upon them." And when she agreed to this, with a touch of sorrowful gladness that they would go back to the rectory and be arranged on the accustomed walls once more, he sent word that he feared that he had not room for them all, and perhaps Miss Matty would kindly allow him to leave some volumes on her shelves. But Miss Matty said that she had her Bible and *Johnson's Dictionary*, and should not have much time for reading, she was afraid; still, I retained a few books out of consideration for the rector's kindness.

The money which he had paid and produced by the sale was partly expended in the stock of tea, and part of it was invested against a rainy day, *i.e.* old age or illness. It was but a small sum it is

true, and it occasioned a few evasions of truth and white lies (all of which I think very wrong indeed—in theory—and would rather not put them in practice), for we knew Miss Matty would be perplexed as to her duty if she were aware of any little reserve fund being made for her while the debts of the bank remained unpaid. Moreover, she had never been told of the way in which her friends were contributing to pay the rent. I should have liked to tell her this, but the mystery of the affair gave a piquancy to their deed of kindness which the ladies were unwilling to give up ; and at first Martha had to shirk many a perplexed question as to her ways and means of living in such a house, but by and by Miss Matty's prudent uneasiness sank down into acquiescence with the existing arrangement.

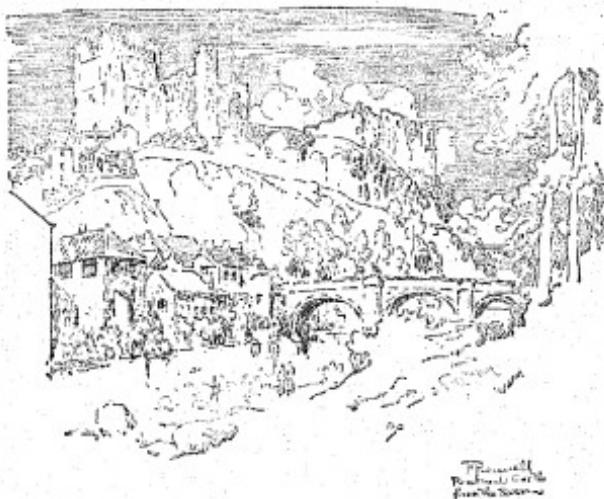
I left Miss Matty with a good heart. Her sales of tea during the first two days had surpassed my most sanguine expectations. The whole country round seemed to be all out of tea at once. The only alteration I could have desired in Miss Matty's way of doing business was, that she should not have so plaintively entreated some of her customers not to buy green tea—running it down as slow poison, sure to destroy the nerves and produce all manner of evil. Their pertinacity in taking it, in spite of all her warnings, distressed her so much that I really

thought she would relinquish the sale of it, and so lose half her custom ; and I was driven to my wit's end for instances of longevity entirely attributable to a persevering use of green tea. But the final argument which settled the question was a happy reference of mine to the train-oil and tallow candles which the Esquimaux not only enjoy but digest. After that she acknowledged that "one man's meat might be another man's poison," and contented herself henceforward with an occasional remonstrance when she thought the purchaser was too young and innocent to be acquainted with the evil effects green tea produced on some constitutions, and an habitual sigh when people old enough to choose more wisely would prefer it.

I had a busy life while Martha was ill. I attended on Miss Matty, and prepared her meals, I cast up her accounts, and examined into the state of her canisters and tumblers. I helped her, too, occasionally, in the shop, and it gave me no small amusement, and sometimes a little uneasiness, to watch her ways there. If a little child came in to ask for an ounce of almond-comfits (and four of the large kind which Miss Matty sold weighed that much), she always added one more by "way of make-weight," as she called it, although the scale was handsomely

turned before ; and when I remonstrated against this, her reply was, "The little things like it so much ! " There was no use in telling her that the fifth comfit weighed a quarter of an ounce, and made every sale into a loss to her pocket. So I remembered the green tea, and winged my shaft with a feather out of her own plumage. I told her how unwholesome almond-comfits were, and how ill excess in them might make the little children. This argument produced some effect, for, henceforward, instead of the fifth comfit, she always told them to hold out their tiny palms, into which she shook either peppermints or ginger lozenges, as a preventive to the dangers that might arise from the previous sale. Altogether the lozenge trade, conducted on these principles, did not promise to be remunerative, but I was happy to find she had made more than twenty pounds during the last year by her sales of tea, and, moreover, that now she was accustomed to it, she did not dislike the employment, which brought her into kindly intercourse with many of the people round about. If she gave them good weight, they, in their turn, brought many a little country present, a few new-laid eggs, a little fresh ripe fruit, a bunch of flowers. The counter was quite loaded with these offerings sometimes, as she told me.

MRS. GASKELL.



POTTER THOMPSON

IT is once more a stormy evening, and as the grey clouds darken down over the gate of Swaledale, I find myself upon the castle bank at Richmond, following a path which curves around the foundations of the ancient Breton fortress just where the masons set them on the solid rock, and gripped it tight with bonds which seem as if they must outlast the world. High over my head the old walls rise firm and solid still, their worn grey outlines broken by splashes of yellow gillyflower and by jutting ivy

bushes, where the nesting birds fly in and out beyond the reach of any enemies not having wings. Far down below me on the left the Swale rushes over boulders with a pleasant splashing, and, following its course with my eye against the stream, I see three arches of a grey stone bridge flung across the waterway, and beyond it woods falling rapidly on either side and fringing all the banks up to the point where the river seems to issue from the hills, which close down grandly with already a suggestion of those stern and lofty ridges which gain for this river valley the character of the wildest among all the Yorkshire dales.

It is a matter of much concern to me that I can nowhere get a distant view of Richmond Castle. Turner did it; and many people know the grand result. For my part, I searched vainly for a point whence I could see the full outline of this very noble building at any distance; and having at last relinquished the attempt, I have come to sit upon the castle bank and consider the place as Providence and the Norman builders have made it, which is much more sensible than climbing feverishly up hill and down hill to discover whether Turner told the truth.

For some reason the castle walk is deserted. Perhaps the Richmond people are at dinner. Perhaps

they distrust that watery sun which, shamed and beaten by his enemies, is just now dropping down towards the wet woods, while a fresh wind steals out of the foldings of the hills, and stirs the hanging ivy by my head. It comes down from the moor, that little wind ; it has the scents of gorse and standing pools among the heather, and I know not what sweet-smelling things, which I shall find for myself to-morrow when I follow up the river past the woods and out on the bare downs, where the hills close sharply round the narrow valley, and the sheep call and answer to each other from the opposite heights. Just so it blew, I suppose, on many an evening when the Bretons dwelt here in the fortress above my head, with all their followers from across the sea, who descended on Richmond in such a cloud, as the old song tells us, keeping alive old grudges as is usual with songsters :

Each came out of Brittany,
With his wife Tiffany,
And his maid Manfras,
And his dog Hardigras.

It would surely have been more blameworthy if they had come without their wives, since come they must. It was William the Conqueror who brought them, so old is the grievance ; for he gave Richmond-

shire to Alan of Brittany, and though that fair inheritance was confiscated as often as the English kings differed from their Breton cousins on any point of consequence, yet it was always restored again, and many a generation went by before Hardigras ceased to bark about the hilly streets of Richmond, or Tiffany to scold in her harsh Breton tongue up and down the courtyards of the castle.

But it is very necessary in things historical to begin at the beginning ; and I have the less excuse for having wandered off to Bretons since there lies somewhere within arm's reach of me, that is to say, in the bowels of the castle rock, a much more notable and famous person, to wit King Arthur, and not he alone but all his knights. Let no one interrupt me with foolish tales of Glastonbury, or of a Cornish chough which flies around the shattered walls of Old Tintagel waiting the awakening of Merlin, the enchanter, and the word of power which will set the blameless king once more in human shape upon the throne of England. These tales are very good for the West Country, and when we go there we will believe them. Here at Richmond it is well known that Arthur and his knights lie sleeping in a cave at the base of this great rock ; and many a boy has spent his summer afternoons in wandering by the river's edge in the hope that he might find the

winding entrance, long since lost and forgotten by the world, and look upon the sleeping knights who sought the Grail and tilted in the forest, and sinned and suffered for it so many centuries ago.

One man did find that entrance. Long ago, I do not know how long, there dwelt a poor butt in Richmond, a rather loutish fellow, who was not much use to any one, but who, like other ne'er-do-wells, had perhaps his dreams and fancies, little though they might profit him in those prosaic days, when cobbling would have served him better. His name was Potter Thompson ; and one day, having quarrelled with his wife, Potter was wandering about the base of the castle rock, in some wonder why he did not choose some deep pool in the river and drown himself, when he noticed an opening in the cliff which seemed to penetrate a long way, and he went into it with a sort of idle curiosity.

The passage widened out as he advanced, and it was not dark, for a faint light shone upon the rock walls which must come, he thought, from crevices open to the day. But when he groped a little further, and the light grew brighter steadily, he thought he might have reached the guard-room of the castle or some old forgotten postern ; and he went on boldly, for if that were so, he might get a sum of money in exchange for the secret. At last

he turned a corner suddenly and stood at the entrance of a lofty cavern, which stretched away so far on either hand that even the bright light of the lamp hanging in an old cresset from the ceiling could not scatter the thick shadows, nor reveal the limits of the cavern. Underneath the lamp there stood a stone table, on which were laid a gigantic sword and such a horn as Potter Thompson had never seen before, rich and wonderful with gold and ivory. Now this was what Potter saw in the first moment ; in the next he distinguished huge figures of knights in armour lying asleep on the floor of the cavern, and among them one who bore on his helmet a crown of gold, and lay breathing gently in his slumber as if he dreamt of none but sweet and pleasant things.

So Potter Thompson, the poor fool, stood and held his breath and watched them, while his heart beat heavily and his scared wits told him he was looking on a sight that never living man had seen before. There lay King Arthur and his knights, sleeping, as he had known they would be found, waiting for the hour when England called for them. And as he watched that strange and noble sight the desire grew eager in him to carry off some proof that he had indeed beheld it, and he stole on tip-toe to the table, and laid hand upon the sword and horn and lifted them, and was stealing back towards the

gloomy passage which had brought him thither when the dark vault rang with a clash of steel, and a knight turned over in his sleep and raised himself upon his arm, and fear seized on Potter Thompson, and he dropped the horn and sword and fled. But as he went a loud voice mocked him, crying at his back :

Potter, Potter Thompson !
If thou hadst either drawn
The sword, or blown the horn,
Thou'st been the luckiest man
That ever yet was born.

So Potter Thompson went and lost his fortune because his heart failed him. Rarely does a second chance come to a man who cannot grasp the first, and Potter never found again the winding passage which had led him into the bowels of the mountain. It is a long sleep which the blameless king has slept since Potter saw him, but no one doubts that he lies there dreaming still. Some day the busy world that spins so rapidly will have leisure to remember him ; England will demand her hero king, and in that hour it will need no Potter Thompson to penetrate the hill and wake him.

I suppose it is no more than natural that in the neighbourhood of so great a fortress men should

find their imagination somewhat stirred by the knowledge that in the course of ages many passages and chambers have been walled up, blocked, or forgotten. There are few buildings in the north to which some such story does not cling, some tale of buried treasure watched by enchanted powers. I shall have one notable story of the kind to tell when I reach Kirkstall Abbey, but here at Richmond such traditions are the more inevitable because there are said to be in truth passages leading from the castle underneath the river, and one, too, which strikes off down the stream in the direction of Easby Abbey. Once long ago—who ever tries to date these stories?—some soldiers quartered in the castle resolved to test the truth of the old tale that this latter passage ran to Easby. They were wise men, their campaigns had taught them prudence, for they perceived the dangers there might be in creeping through a long closed passage, blocked at least in part by fallen masonry, and doubtless reeking with mephitic vapours. So they resolved to run those risks vicariously, and selected a small drummer-boy, such a boy as could be replaced with little trouble to the regiment, and who, moreover, could creep through almost any crevice larger than a mousehole.

Perhaps the boy was glad enough to go, eager like any other urchin to make discoveries, and having



his head full of King Arthur, whom he might very well find, and win the fortune that Potter Thompson had let slip. So he went boldly enough into the dark vault, carrying his drum before him, and when the prudent soldiers who had sent him stood and heard the last echo of his drumming die away beneath the ground, they went up again to the castle courtyard, where they heard it plainly coming from below. And so the muffled rolling of the drum, played by the stout-hearted little lad below, led the soldiers out of the castle gate and through the steep streets of the ancient town, sounding fainter and more distant, till at last when the men stood upon a spot outside the Grammar School, which any child in Richmond will point out, the drumming ceased. It did not die away and become inaudible by degrees. It stopped suddenly, as if the lad had ceased playing, and listen as they might, they never heard him beat again.

I know not, nor can any one tell me, what it was that stopped the poor child's drumming. Perhaps he found King Arthur and lies there sleeping with him at this hour. Perhaps . . . but why speculate on what remains a mystery? Yet there are those who say that if you stand upon this spot at night, when the streets are quiet and the lights are out, and only the loud singing of the river fills the air,

you may hear, very faint and distant, the long rolling of a drum, some signal, surely, from the child who lies forgotten in dark caverns of the earth, some appeal to those who go about in fresh air and see the clear skies of the upper world.

ARTHUR H. NORWAY.

(These stories are told in "Highways and Byways in Yorkshire," a book which every boy and girl of the famous county ought to remember.)

YE CARPETTE KNYGHTE

I HAVE a horse—a ryghte goode horse—
 Ne doe I envye those
 Who scoure ye playne yn headye course
 Tyll soddayne on theyre nose
 They lyghte wyth unexpected force :
 Yt ys—a horse of clothes.

I have a saddel—"Say'st thou soe ?
 Wyth styrruppes, Knyghte, to boote ?"
 I sayde not that—I answe're "Noe"—
 Yt lacketh such, I woote :
 Yt ys a mutton-saddel, loe !
 Parte of ye fleecye brute.

I have a bytte—a ryghte goode bytte—
 As shall bee seene in tyme.
 Ye jawe of horse it wyll not fytle :
 Yts use ys more sublyme.
 Fayre Syr, how deemest thou of yt ?
 Yt ys—thys bytte of rhyme.

LEWIS CARROLL.

AN EASTER GREETING TO EVERY
 CHILD WHO LOVES " ALICE "

DEAR CHILD—Please to fancy, if you can, that you are reading a real letter, from a real friend whom you have seen, and whose voice you can seem to yourself to hear, wishing you, as I do now with all my heart, a happy Easter.

Do you know that delicious dreamy feeling when one first wakes on a summer morning with the twitter of birds in the air, and the fresh breeze coming in at the open window—when lying lazily, with eyes half-shut, one sees as in a dream green boughs waving, or waters rippling in a golden light ? It is a pleasure very near to sadness, bringing tears to one's eyes like a beautiful picture or poem. And is not that a Mother's gentle hand that undraws your curtains, and a Mother's sweet voice that summons you to

rise? To rise and forget, in the bright sunlight, the ugly dreams that frightened you when all was dark—to rise and enjoy another happy day, first kneeling to thank that unseen Friend, who sends you the beautiful sun?

Are these strange words from a writer of such tales as *Alice*? And is this a strange letter to find in a book of nonsense? It may be so. Some perhaps may blame me for thus mixing together things grave and gay; others may smile and think it odd that any one should speak of solemn things at all, except in church and on a Sunday: but I think—nay, I am sure—that some children will read this gently and lovingly, and in the spirit in which I have written it.

For I do not believe God means us thus to divide life into two halves—to wear a grave face on Sunday, and to think it out-of-place to even so much as mention Him on a week-day. Do you think He cares to see only kneeling figures, and to hear only tones of prayer—and that He does not also love to see the lambs leaping in the sunlight, and to hear the merry voices of the children, as they roll among the hay? Surely their innocent laughter is as sweet in His ears as the grandest anthem that ever rolled up from the “dim religious light” of some solemn cathedral?

And if I have written anything to add to those stories of innocent and healthy amusement that are laid up in books for the children I love so well, it is surely something I may hope to look back upon without shame and sorrow (as how much of life must then be recalled !) when *my* turn comes to walk through the valley of shadows.

This Easter sun will rise on you, dear child, feeling your "life in every limb," and eager to rush out into the fresh morning air—and many an Easter-day will come and go, before it finds you feeble and grey-headed, creeping wearily out to bask once more in the sunlight—but it is good, even now, to think sometimes of that great morning when the "Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."

Surely your gladness need not be the less for the thought that you will one day see a brighter dawn than this—when lovelier sights will meet your eyes than any waving trees or rippling waters—when angel-hands shall undraw your curtains, and sweeter tones than ever loving Mother breathed shall wake you to a new and glorious day—and when all the sadness, and the sin, that darkened life on this little earth, shall be forgotten like the dreams of a night that is past!—Your affectionate friend,

LEWIS CARROLL.

EASTER, 1876.

A SIMPLE AQUARIUM

Buy at any glass-shop a cylindrical glass jar, some six inches in diameter and ten high, which will cost you from three to four shillings ; wash it clean, and fill it with clean salt water, dipped out of any pool among the rocks, only looking first to see that there is no dead fish or other evil matter in the said pool, and that no stream from the land runs into it. If you choose to take the trouble to dip up the water over a boat's side, so much the better.

So much for your vase ; now to stock it.

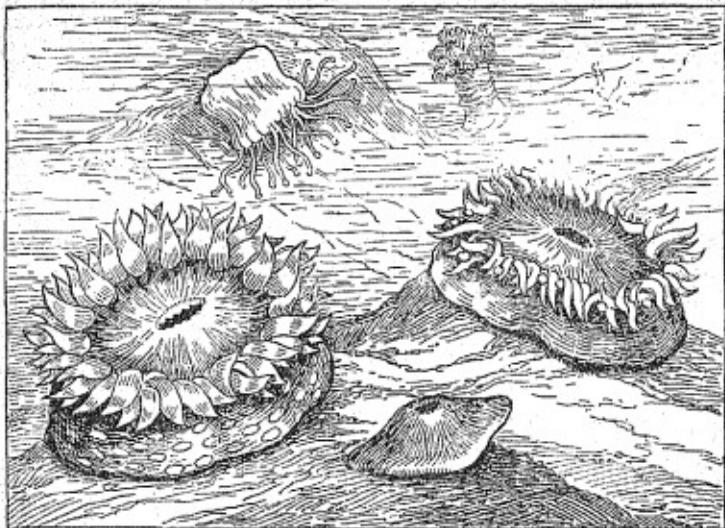
Go down at low spring-tide to the nearest ledge of rocks, and with a hammer and chisel chip off a few pieces of stone covered with growing sea-weed. Avoid the common and coarser kinds which cover the surface of rocks, for they give out under water a slime which will foul your tank : but choose the more delicate species which fringe the edges of every pool at low-water mark ; the pink coralline, the dark purple ragged dulse, the Carrageen moss, and above all, the commonest of all, the delicate green *Ulva*, which you will see growing everywhere in wrinkled fan-shaped sheets, as thin as the finest silver-paper.

The smallest bits of stone are sufficient, provided the sea-weeds have hold of them ; for they have no

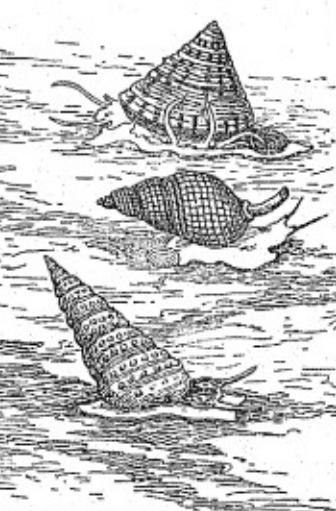
real roots, but adhere by a small disc, deriving no nourishment from the rock, but only from the water. Take care, meanwhile, that there be as little as possible on the stone, beside the weed itself. Especially scrape off any small sponges, and see that no worms have made their twining tubes of sand among the weed-stems ; if they have, drag them out, for they will surely die, and as surely spoil all by sulphuretted hydrogen, blackness, and evil smells.

Put your weeds into your tank, and settle them at the bottom, which last some say should be covered with a layer of pebbles ; but let the beginner leave it as bare as possible, for the pebbles only tempt cross-grained annelids to crawl under them, die, and spoil all by decaying, whereas if the bottom of the vase is bare, you can see a sickly or dead inhabitant at once, and take him out (which you must do) instantly. Let your weeds stand quietly in the vase a day or two before you put in any live animals ; and even then, do not put any in if the water does not appear perfectly clear : but lift out the weeds, and renew the water ere you replace them.

Now for the live stock. In the crannies of every rock you will find sea-anemones ; and a dozen of these only will be enough to convert your little vase into the most brilliant of living flower-gardens. There they hang upon the under side of the ledges,



SEA ANEMONES.
SQUINADO CRAB.



SEA SNAILS.

apparently mere rounded lumps of jelly : one is of a dark purple dotted with green ; another of a rich chocolate ; another of a delicate olive ; another sienna-yellow ; another all but white.

Take them from their rock ; you can do it easily by slipping under them your finger-nail, or the edge of a pewter spoon. Take care to tear the sucking base as little as possible (though a small rent they will darn for themselves in a few days, easily enough), and drop them into a basket of wet sea-weed ; when you get home, turn them into a dish full of water and leave them for the night, and go to look at them to-morrow. What a change ! The dull lumps of jelly have taken root and flowered during the night, and your dish is filled from side to side with a bouquet of chrysanthemums ; each has expanded into a hundred-petalled flower, crimson, pink, purple, or orange ; touch one, and it shrinks together like a sensitive plant, displaying at the root of the petals a ring of brilliant turquoise beads.

That is the commonest of all the anemones ; you may have him when and where you will : but if you will search those rocks somewhat closer, you will find even more gorgeous species than him. See in that pool some dozen noble ones, in full bloom, and quite six inches across, some of them. If their cousins whom we found just now were like chrys-

anthemums, these are like quilled dahlias. Their arms are stouter and shorter in proportion than those of the last species, but their colour is equally brilliant. One is a brilliant blood-red ; another a delicate sea-blue, striped with pink ; but most have the disc and the innumerable arms striped and ringed with various shades of grey and brown.

Shall we get them ? By all means, if we can. Touch one. Where is he now ? Gone ? Vanished into air, or into stone ? Not quite. You see that knot of sand and broken shell lying on the rock, where your dahlia was one moment ago. Touch it, and you will find it leathery and elastic. That is all which remains of the live dahlia. Never mind ; get your finger into the crack under him, work him gently but firmly out, and take him home, and he will be as happy and as gorgeous as ever to-morrow.

Let your anemones stand for a day or two in the dish, and then, picking out the liveliest and handsomest, detach them once more from their hold, drop them into your vase, right them with a bit of stick, so that the sucking base is downwards, and leave them to themselves thenceforth.

But you will want more than these anemones, both for your own amusement, and for the health of your tank. Microscopic animals will breed, and will also die ; and you need for them some such

scavenger as the Squinado. Turn, then, a few stones which lie piled on each other at extreme low-water mark, and five minutes' search will give you the very animal you want—a little crab, of a dingy russet above, and on the underside like smooth porcelain. His back is quite flat, and so are his large angular fringed claws, which, when he folds them up, lie in the same plane with his shell, and fit neatly into its edges. Compact little rogue that he is, made especially for sidling in and out of cracks and crannies, he carries with him such an apparatus of combs and brushes as Isidor or Floris never dreamed of, with which he sweeps out of the sea-water at every moment shoals of minute animalcules, and sucks them into his tiny mouth.

Next, your sea-weeds, if they thrive as they ought to do, will sow their minute spores in millions around them ; and these, as they vegetate, will form a green film on the inside of the glass, spoiling your prospect ; you may rub it off for yourself, if you will, with a rag fastened to a stick, but if you wish at once to save yourself trouble, and to see how all emergencies in nature are provided for, you will set three or four live shells to do it for you, and to keep your subaqueous lawn close mown.

That last word is no figure of speech. Look among the beds of sea-weed for a few of the bright

yellow or green sea-snails, or Conical Tops, especially that beautiful pink one spotted with brown, which you are sure to find about shaded rock-ledges at dead low tide, and put them into your aquarium. For the present they will only nibble the green ulvæ, but when the film of young weed begins to form, you will see it mown off every morning as fast as it grows, in little semicircular sweeps, just as if a fairy's scythe had been at work during the night.

And a scythe has been at work ; none other than the tongue of the little shell-fish.

A prawn or two, and a few minute star-fish, will make your aquarium complete, though you may add to it endlessly, as one glance at the salt-water tanks of the Zoological Gardens and the strange and beautiful forms which they contain will prove to you sufficiently.

You have two more enemies to guard against ; dust and heat. If the surface of the water becomes clogged with dust, the communication between it and the life-giving oxygen of the air is cut off ; and then your animals are liable to die, for the very same reason that fish die in a pond which is long frozen over, unless a hole be broken in the ice to admit the air. You must guard against this by occasional stirring of the surface (it should be done once a day,

if possible), and by keeping on a cover. A piece of muslin tied over will do, but a better defence is a plate of glass, raised on wire some half-inch above the edge, so as to admit the air.

I am not sure that a sheet of brown paper laid over the vase is not the best of all, because that by its shade also guards against the next evil, which is heat. Against that you must guard by putting a curtain of muslin or oiled paper between the vase and the sun, if it be very fierce, or simply (for simple expedients are best) by laying a handkerchief over it till the heat is past. But if you leave your vase in a sunny window long enough to let the water get tepid, all is over with your pets. Half-an-hour's boiling may frustrate the care of weeks. And yet, on the other hand, light you must have, and you can hardly have too much. Some animals certainly prefer shade, and hide in the darkest crannies ; and for them, if your aquarium is large enough, you must provide shade by arranging the bits of stone into piles and caverns. But without light your sea-weeds will neither thrive nor keep the water sweet.

With plenty of light you will see " thousands of tiny globules forming on every plant, and even all over the stones, where the infant vegetation is beginning to grow ; and these globules presently rise in

rapid succession to the surface all over the vessel, and this process goes on uninterruptedly as long as the rays of the sun are uninterrupted.

"Now these globules consist of *pure oxygen*, given out by the plants under the stimulus of light; and to this oxygen the animals in the tank owe their life. The difference between the profusion of oxygen-bubbles produced on a sunny day, and the paucity of those seen on a dark, cloudy day, or in a northern aspect, is very marked." Choose, therefore, a south or east window, but draw down the blind, or throw a handkerchief over all if the heat become fierce. The water should always feel cold to your hand, let the temperature outside be what it may.

Next, you must make up for evaporation by *fresh* water. A very little will suffice, as often as in summer you find the water in your vase sink below its original level, and prevent the water from getting too salt. For the salts, remember, do not evaporate with the water, and if you left the vase in the sun for a few weeks, it would become a mere brine pan.

But how will you move your treasures up to town?

The simplest plan which I have found successful is an earthen jar. You may buy them with a cover which screws on with two iron clasps. If you do not find such, a piece of oilskin tied over the mouth

is enough. But do not fill the jar full of water; leave about a quarter of the contents in empty air, which the water may absorb, and so keep itself fresh. And any pieces of stone, or oysters, which you send up, hang by a string from the mouth, that they may not hurt tender animals by rolling about the bottom. With these simple precautions, anything which you are likely to find will well endure forty-eight hours of travel.

One more hint before we part. If, after all, you are not going down to the seaside this year, and have no opportunities of testing "the wonders of the shore," you may still study Natural History in your own drawing-room, by looking a little into "the wonders of the pond."

I am not jesting; a fresh-water aquarium, though by no means as beautiful as a salt-water one, is even more easily established. A glass jar, floored with two or three inches of pond-mud (which should be covered with fine gravel to prevent the mud washing up); a specimen of each of two water-plants; these (in themselves, from the transparency of their circulation, interesting microscopic objects) for oxygen-breeding vegetables; and for animals, the pickings of any pond.

A minnow or two, an eft; some of those caddis-baits (walking tubes of straw, sticks, and shells)

and water-crickets which you may find under any stone ; a few of the delicate pond-snails, water-beetles, of activity inconceivable, and that wondrous bug the *Notonecta*, who lies on his back all day, rowing about his boat-shaped body, with one long pair of oars, in search of animalcules, and the moment the lights are out, turns head over heels, rights himself, and opening a pair of handsome wings, starts to fly about the dark room in company with his friend the water-beetle, and (I suspect) catch flies ; and then slips back demurely into the water with the first streak of dawn.

These animals, their habits, their miraculous transformations, as the caddis-baits appear at the top of the water as alder-flies and sedge-flies and the water-crickets as duns and drakes of the most delicate beauty, might give many an hour's quiet amusement to an invalid, laid on a sofa, or imprisoned in a sick-room, and debarred from reading, unless by some such means, any page of that green book outside, whose pen is the finger of God, whose covers are the fire kingdoms and the star kingdoms, and its leaves the heather-bells, and the polypes of the sea, and the gnats above the summer stream.

(*All boys and girls who love Nature should read Charles Kingsley's "Glaucus, or the Wonders of the Shore," from which the above passage is taken.*)

RHŒCUS

GOD sends His teachers unto every age,
 To every clime and every race of men,
 With revelations fitted to their growth
 And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
 Into the selfish rule of one sole race :
 Therefore each form of worship that hath swayed
 The life of man, and given it to grasp
 The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
 Infolds some germs of goodness and of right ;
 Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
 The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
 Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in the wood,
 Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,
 And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,
 He propped its gray trunk with admiring care,
 And with a thoughtless footstep loitered on.
 But, as he turned, he heard a voice behind
 That murmured " Rhœcus ! " 'Twas as if the leaves,
 Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured it,
 And, while he paused bewildered, yet again
 It murmured " Rhœcus ! " softer than a breeze.
 He started, and beheld with dizzy eyes
 What seemed the substance of a happy dream



MINERVA, THE GREEK GODDESS OF WISDOM.

Stand there before him, spreading a warm glow
 Within the green glooms of the shadowy oak.
 It seemed a woman's shape, yet far too fair
 To be a woman, and with eyes too meek
 For any that were wont to mate with gods.
 All silent like a goddess stood she there.

"Rhœcus, I am the Dryad of this tree,"
 Thus she began, dropping her low-toned words
 Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of dew,
 "And with it I am doomed to live and die;
 The rain and sunshine are my caterers,
 Nor have I other bliss than simple life;
 Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can give,
 And with a thankful joy it shall be thine."

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the heart,
 Yet, by the prompting of such beauty bold,
 Answered: "What is there that can satisfy
 The endless craving of the soul but love?
 Give me thy love, or but the hope of that
 Which must be evermore my spirit's goal."
 After a little pause she said again,
 But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,
 "I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;
 An hour before the sunset meet me here."
 And straightway there was nothing he could see
 But the green glooms beneath the shadowy oak,

And not a sound came to his straining ears
But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,
And far away upon an emerald slope
The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe.

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,
Men did not think that happy things were dreams
Because they overstepped the narrow bourn
Of likelihood, but reverently deemed
Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful
To be the guerdon of a daring heart.
So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,
And all along unto the city's gate
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,
The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,
And he could scarce believe he had not wings,
Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins
Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,
But one that in the present dwelt too much,
And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoe'er
Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,
Like the contented peasant of a vale,
Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.
So, haply meeting in the afternoon
Some comrades who were playing at the dice,
He joined them, and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,
 And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,
 Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,
 When through the room there hummed a yellow bee
 That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs
 As if to light. And Rhœcus laughed and said,
 Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,
 "By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"
 And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
 But still the bee came back, and thrice again
 Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.
 Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
 And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,
 Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
 Against the red disk of the setting sun,—
 And instantly the blood sank from his heart,
 As if its very walls had caved away.

Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,
 Ran madly through the city and the gate,
 And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade,
 By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,
 Darkened well-nigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,
 And, listening fearfully, he heard once more
 The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand:

Whereat he looked around him, but could see
Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.
Then sighed the voice " O Rhœcus ! nevermore
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love
More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart :
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
And sent'st him back to me with bruisèd wings.
We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
We ever ask an undivided love,
And he who scorns the least of Nature's works
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
Farewell ! for thou canst never see me more."

Then Rhœcus beat his breast and groaned aloud,
And cried, " Be pitiful ! forgive me yet
This once, and I shall never need it more ! "
" Alas ! " the voice returned, " 'tis thou art blind,
Not I unmerciful ; I can forgive,
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes ;
Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
With that again there murmured " Nevermore ! "
And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.

The night had gathered round him : o'er the plain
 The city sparkled with its thousand lights,
 And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
 Harshly and like a curse ; above, the sky,
 With all its bright sublimity of stars,
 Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze :
 Beauty was all around him and delight,
 But from that eve he was alone on earth.

J. R. LOWELL.



A scene from a Greek tomb showing "the endrened old nurse receiving the parting handshake of her former nurslings."—Prof. TUCKER,

“ EXIT TYRANNUS ”

THE eventful day had arrived at last, the day which, when first named, had seemed—like all golden dates that promise anything definite—so immeasurably remote. When it was first announced, a fortnight before, that Miss Smedley was really going, the resultant ecstasies had occupied a full week, during which we blindly revelled in the contemplation and discussion of her past tyrannies, crimes, malignities ; in recalling to each other this or that insult, dis-honour, or physical assault, sullenly endured at a time when deliverance was not even a small star on the horizon ; and in mapping out the shining days to come, with special new troubles of their own, no doubt—since this is but a work-a-day world !—but at least free from one familiar scourge. The time that remained had been taken up by the planning of practical expressions of the popular sentiment. Under Edward's masterly direction arrangements had been made for a flag to be run up over the hen-house at the very moment when the fly, with Miss Smedley's boxes on top and the grim oppressor herself inside, began to move off down the drive. Three brass cannons, set on the brow of the sunk fence, were to proclaim our deathless sentiments in the ears of the retreating foe ; the dogs were to wear ribbons ;

and later—but this depended on our powers of evasiveness and dissimulation—there might be a small bonfire, with a cracker or two, if the public funds could bear the unwonted strain.

I was awakened by Harold digging me in the ribs, and “She’s going to-day!” was the morning hymn that scattered the clouds of sleep. Strange to say, it was with no corresponding jubilation of spirits that I slowly realised the momentous fact. Indeed, as I dressed, a dull, disagreeable feeling that I could not define grew up in me—something like a physical bruise. Harold was evidently feeling it too, for after repeating “She’s going to-day!” in a tone more befitting the Litany, he looked hard in my face for direction as to how the situation was to be taken. But I crossly bade him look sharp and say his prayers, and not bother me. What could this gloom portend, that on a day of days like the present seemed to hang my heavens with black?

Down at last and out in the sun, we found Edward before us, swinging on a gate and chanting a farm-yard ditty in which all the beasts appear in due order, jargoning in their several tongues, and every verse begins with the couplet :

Now, my lads, come with me,
Out in the morning early !

The fateful exodus of the day had evidently slipped his memory entirely. I touched him on the shoulder. "She's going to-day!" I said. Edward's carol subsided like a water-tap turned off. "So she is!" he replied, and got down at once off the gate. And we returned to the house without another word.

At breakfast Miss Smedley behaved in a most mean and uncalled-for manner. The right divine of governesses to govern wrong includes no right to cry. In thus usurping the prerogative of their victims they ignore the rules of the ring, and hit below the belt. Charlotte was crying, of course, but that counted for nothing. Charlotte even cried when the pigs' noses were ringed in due season, thereby evoking the cheery contempt of the operators, who asserted they liked it, and doubtless knew. But when the cloud-compeller, her bolts laid aside, resorted to tears, mutinous humanity had a right to feel aggrieved, and think itself placed in a false and difficult position. What would the Romans have done supposing Hannibal had cried? History has not even considered the possibility. Rules and precedents should be strictly observed on both sides. When they are violated, the other party is justified in feeling injured.

There were no lessons that morning, naturally—another grievance! The fitness of things required

that we should have struggled to the last in a confused medley of moods and tenses, and parted for ever, flushed with hatred, over the dismembered corpse of the multiplication table. But this thing was not to be, and I was free to stroll by myself through the garden, and combat, as best I might, this growing feeling of depression. It was a wrong system altogether, I thought, this going of people one had got used to. Things ought always to continue as they had been. Change there must be, of course: pigs, for instance, came and went with disturbing frequency—

Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged and sank at last;

but Nature had ordered it so, and in requital had provided for rapid successors.

Edward slouched up alongside of me presently, with a hang-dog look on him, as if he had been caught stealing jam. "What a lark it'll be when she's really gone!" he observed, with a swagger obviously assumed.

"Grand fun!" I replied dolorously, and conversation flagged.

We reached the henhouse, and contemplated the banner of freedom lying ready to flaunt the breezes at the supreme moment.

"Shall you run it up," I asked, "when the fly starts, or—or wait a little till it's out of sight?"

Edward gazed round him dubiously. "We're going to have some rain, I think," he said; "and—and it's a new flag. It would be a pity to spoil it. P'raps I won't run it up at all."

Harold came round the corner like a bison pursued by Indians. "I've polished up the cannons," he cried, "and they look grand! Mayn't I load 'em now?"

"You leave 'em alone," said Edward severely, "or you'll be blowing yourself up" (consideration for others was not usually Edward's strong point). "Don't touch the gunpowder till you're told, or you'll get your head smacked."

Harold fell behind, limp, squashed, obedient. "She wants me to write to her," he began presently. "Says she doesn't mind the spelling, if I'll only write. Fancy her saying that!"

"Oh, shut up, will you?" said Edward savagely; and once more we were silent, with only our thoughts for sorry company.

"Let's go off to the copse," I suggested, timidly, feeling that something had to be done to relieve the tension, "and cut more new bows and arrows."

"She gave me a knife my last birthday," said Edward moodily, never budging. "It wasn't much of a knife, but I wish I hadn't lost it."

"When my legs used to ache," I said, "she sat up half the night rubbing stuff on them. I forgot all about that till this morning."

"There's the fly!" cried Harold suddenly. "I can hear it scrunching on the gravel."

Then for the first time we turned and stared each other in the face.

The fly and its contents had finally disappeared through the gate, the rumble of its wheels had died away. Yet no flag floated defiantly in the sun, no cannons proclaimed the passing of a dynasty. From out the frosted cake of our existence Fate had cut an irreplaceable segment: turn which way we would, the void was present. We sneaked off in different directions, mutually undesirous of company; and it seemed borne in upon me that I ought to go and dig my garden right over from end to end. It didn't actually want digging; on the other hand, no amount of digging could affect it, for good or for evil; so I worked steadily, strenuously, under the hot sun, stifling thought in action. At the end of an hour or so I was joined by Edward.

"I've been chopping up wood," he explained, in a guilty sort of way, though nobody had called on him to account for his doings.

"What for?" I inquired, stupidly; "there's piles and piles of it chopped up already."

"I know," said Edward, "but there's no harm in having a bit over. You never can tell what may happen. But what have you been doing all this digging for?"

"You said it was going to rain," I explained hastily, "so I thought I'd get the digging done before it came. Good gardeners always tell you that's the right thing to do."

"It did look like rain at one time," Edward admitted; "but it's passed off now. Very queer weather we're having. I suppose that's why I've felt so funny all day."

"Yes, I suppose it's the weather," I replied. "*I've* been feeling funny too."

The weather had nothing to do with it, as we well knew, but we would both have died rather than admit the real reason.

KENNETH GRAHAME.

Courage, Heart! Look up! Do you not know the blue sky is away up there beyond the clouds? Only the clouds lower. Keep your thought on the blue.

HELEN VAN ANDERSON.



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SAINT MARTIN PARTING HIS CLOAK WITH THE BEGGAR.

From the painting by Van Dyck.

TO A PINE-TREE

FAR up on Katahdin thou towerest,
Purple-blue with the distance and vast ;
Like a cloud o'er the lowlands thou lowerest,
That hangs poised on a lull in the blast,
To its fall leaning awful.

In the storm, like a prophet o'er-maddened,
Thou singest and tossest thy branches ;
weath' heart with the terror is gladdened,
felt so thou forebodest the dread avalanches,
" Ye When whole mountains swoop valeward.

" *I've* Th the calm thou o'erstretchest the valleys
well Vith thine arms, as if blessings imploring,
tha ke an old king led forth from his palace,
When his people to battle are pouring
From the city beneath him.

To the lumberer asleep 'neath thy glooming
Thou dost sing of wild billows in motion,
Till he longs to be swung 'mid their boooming
In the tents of the Arabs of ocean,
Whose finned isles are their cattle.

For the gale snatches thee for his lyre,
With mad hand crashing melody frantic,
While he pours forth his mighty desire
To leap down on the eager Atlantic,
Whose arms stretch to his playmate.

The wild storm makes his lair in thy branches,
Preying thence on the continent under ;
Like a lion, crouched close on his haunches,
There awaiteth his leap the fierce thunder,
Growling low with impatience.

Spite of winter, thou keep'st thy green glory,
Lusty father of Titans past number !
The snowflakes alone make thee hoary,
Nestling close to thy branches in slumber,
And thee mantling with silence.

Thou alone know'st the splendour of winter,
'Mid thy snow-silvered, hushed precipices,
Hearing crags of green ice groan and splinter,
And then plunge down the muffled abysses
In the quiet of midnight.

Thou alone know'st the glory of summer,
Gazing down on thy broad seas of forest,
On thy subjects that send a proud murmur
Up to thee, to their sachem, who towerest
From thy bleak throne to heaven.

J. R. LOWELL.

OUT OF DOORS IN FEBRUARY

I

THE cawing of the rooks in February shows that the time is coming when their nests will be re-occupied. They resort to the trees, and perch above the old nests to indicate their rights ; for in the rookery possession is the law, and not nine-tenths of it only. In the slow dull cold of winter even these noisy birds are quiet, and as the vast flocks pass over, night and morning, to and from the woods in which they roost, there is scarcely a sound. Through the mist their black wings advance in silence, the jackdaws with them are chilled into unwonted quiet, and unless you chance to look up the crowd may go over unnoticed. But so soon as the waters begin to make a sound in February, running in the ditches and splashing over stones, the rooks commence the speeches and con-

versations which will continue till late into the following autumn.

The general idea is that they pair in February, but there are some reasons for thinking that the rooks, in fact, choose their mates at the end of the preceding summer. They are then in large flocks, and if only casually glanced at appear mixed together without any order or arrangement. They move on the ground and fly in the air so close, one beside the other, that at the first glance or so you cannot distinguish them apart. Yet if you should be lingering along the by-ways of the fields as the acorns fall, and the leaves come rustling down in the warm sunny autumn afternoons, and keep an observant eye upon the rooks in the trees, or on the fresh-turned furrows, they will be seen to act in couples.

On the ground couples alight near each other, on the trees they perch near each other, and in the air fly side by side. Like soldiers each has his comrade. Wedged in the ranks every man looks like his fellow, and there seems no tie between them but a common discipline. Intimate acquaintance with barrack or camp life would show that every one had his friend. There is also the mess, or companionship of half-a-dozen, a dozen, or more, and something like this exists part of the year in the armies of the rooks.

After the nest time is over they flock together, and

each family of three or four flies in concert. Later on they apparently choose their own particular friends, that is the young birds do so. All through the winter after, say October, these pairs keep together, though lost in the general mass to the passing spectator. If you alarm them while feeding on the ground in winter, supposing you have not got a gun, they merely rise up to the nearest tree, and it may then be observed that they do this in pairs. One perches on a branch and a second comes to him. When February arrives, and they resort to the nests to look after or seize on the property there, they are in fact already paired, though the almanacs put down St. Valentine's Day as the date of courtship.

There is very often a warm interval in February, sometimes a few days earlier and sometimes later, but as a rule it happens that a week or so of mild sunny weather occurs about this time. Released from the grip of the frost, the streams trickle forth from the fields and pour into the ditches, so that while walking along the footpath there is a murmur all around coming from the rush of water. The murmur of the poets is indeed louder in February than in the more pleasant days of summer, for then the growth of aquatic grasses checks the flow and stills it, whilst in February, every stone, or flint, or lump of chalk divides the current and causes a

vibration. With this murmur of water, and mild time, the rooks caw incessantly, and the birds at large essay to utter their welcome of the sun.

The wet furrows reflect the rays so that the dark earth gleams, and in the slight mist that stays farther away the light pauses and fills the vapour with radiance. Through this luminous mist the larks race after each other twittering, and as they turn aside, swerving in their swift flight, their white breasts appear for a moment. As while standing by a pool the fishes come into sight, emerging as they swim round from the shadow of the deeper water, so the larks dart over the low hedge, and through the mist, and pass before you, and are gone again. All at once one checks his pursuit, forgets the immediate object, and rises, singing as he soars. The notes fall from the air over the dark wet earth, over the dank grass, and broken withered fern of the hedges, and listening to them it seems for a moment spring.

There is sunshine in the song: the lark and the light are one. He gives us a few minutes of summer in February days. In May he rises before as yet the dawn is come, and the sunrise flows down to us under through his notes. On his breast, high above the earth, the first rays fall as the rim of the sun edges up at the eastward hill. The lark and the light are as one, and wherever he glides over the wet furrows

the glint of the sun goes with him. Anon alighting he runs between the lines of the green corn. In hot summer, when the open hill-side is burned with bright light, the larks are then singing and soaring. Stepping up the hill laboriously, suddenly a lark starts into the light and pours forth a rain of unwearied notes overhead. With bright light, and sunshine, and sunrise, and blue skies the bird is so associated in the mind, that even to see him in the frosty days of winter, at least assures us that summer will certainly return.

Ought not winter, in allegorical designs, the rather to be represented with such things that might suggest hope than such as convey a cold and grim despair? The withered leaf, the snowflake, the hedging bill that cuts and destroys, why these? Why not rather the dear larks for one? They fly in flocks, and amid the white expanse of snow (in the south) their pleasant twitter or call is heard as they sweep along seeking some grassy spot cleared by the wind. The lark, the bird of the light, is there in the bitter short days. Put the lark then for winter, a sign of hope, a certainty of summer. Put, too, the sheathed bud, for if you search the hedge you will find the buds there, on tree and bush, carefully wrapped around with the case which protects them as a cloak. Put, too, the sharp needles of the green corn; let the wind clear it of snow a little way, and

show that under cold clod and colder snow the green thing pushes up, knowing that summer must come.

Nothing despairs but man. Set the sharp curve of the white new moon in the sky : she is white in true frost, and yellow a little if it is devising change. Set the new moon as something that symbols an increase. Set the shepherd's crook in a corner as a token that the flocks are already enlarged in number. The shepherd is the symbolic man of the hardest winter time. His work is never more important than then. Those that only roam the fields when they are pleasant in May, see the lambs at play in the meadow, and naturally think of lambs and May flowers. But the lamb was born in the adversity of snow. Or you might set the morning star, for it burns and burns and glitters in the winter dawn, and throws forth beams like those of metal consumed in oxygen. There is nought that I know by comparison with which I might indicate the glory of the morning star, while yet the dark night hides in the hollows. The lamb is born in the fold. The morning star glitters in the sky. The bud is alive in its sheath ; the green corn under the snow ; the lark twitters as he passes. Now these to me are the allegory of winter.

These mild hours in February check the hold which winter has been gaining, and as it were, tear his claws out of the earth, their prey. If it has not



Photo, Frederick Hollyer.

DAWN.

From the painting by Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

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Photo, Frederick Haldor.

DAWN.

From the painting by Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

been so bitter previously, when this Gulf Stream or current of warmer air enters the expanse it may bring forth a butterfly and tenderly woo the first violet into flower. But this depends on its having been only moderately cold before, and also upon the stratum, whether it is backward clay, or forward gravel and sand. Spring dates are quite different according to the locality, and when violets may be found in one district, in another there is hardly a woodbine-leaf out. The border line may be traced, and is occasionally so narrow, one may cross over it almost at a step. It would sometimes seem as if even the nut-tree bushes bore larger and finer nuts on the warmer soil, and that they ripened quicker. Any curious in the first of things, whether it be a leaf, or flower, or a bird, should bear this in mind, and not be discouraged because he hears some one else has already discovered or heard something.

II

A little note taken now at this bare time of the kind of earth may lead to an understanding of the district. It is plain where the plough has turned it, where the rabbits have burrowed and thrown it out, where a tree has been felled by the gales, by the brook where the bank is worn away, or by the sediment at the shallow places. Before the grass

and weeds, and corn and flowers have hidden it, the character of the soil is evident at these natural sections without the aid of a spade. Going slowly along the footpath—indeed you cannot go fast in moist February—it is a good time to select the places and map them out where herbs and flowers will most likely come first.

All the autumn lies prone on the ground. Dead dark leaves ~~were~~ washed to their woody frames, short grey ~~wes~~ ^{the} some few decayed hulls of hedge fruit, and among these the mors or stocks of the plants that do not lie away, but lie as it were on the surface waiting. Here the strong teazle will presently stand high ; here the ground-ivy will dot the mound with bluish-purple. But it will be necessary to walk slowly to find the ground-ivy flowers under the cover of the briers.

These lot to ~~be~~ will be a likely place for a blackbird's nest ; ~~ave~~ tr. thick close hawthorn for a bullfinch ; these ~~shed~~able thickets with remnants of old nettle stalks ~~wave~~ be frequented by the whitethroat after a while. The hedge is now but a lattice-work which will before long be hung with green. Now it ^{about if} can be seen through, and now is the time to arrange ^{is to be} for future discovery. In May everything will be hidden, and unless the most promising places are all ^a selected beforehand, it will not be easy to search

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long
etc.

them out. The broad ditch will be arched over, the plants rising on the mound will meet the green boughs drooping, and all the vacancy will be filled. But having observed the spot in winter you can almost make certain of success in spring.

It is this previous knowledge which invests those who are always on the spot, those who work much in the fields or have the care of woods, with their apparent prescience. They lead the ~~com~~mer to a hedge, or the corner of a copse, or a ~~ie~~ may the brook, announcing beforehand that they ~~ma~~assured something will be found there; and ~~s me~~is. This, too, is one reason why a fixed observer[?] usually sees more than one who rambles a great deal and covers ten times the space. The fixed observer who hardly goes a mile from home is like the man who sits still by the edge of a crowd, and by-and-by his lost companion returns to him. To walk ~~a somethin~~arch of persons in a crowd is well known worst way of recovering them. Sit s^t will often come by. ~~s~~ bare time

In a far more certain manner th~~is~~ ^{standing} with birds and animals. They all come back[?] during a twelvemonth probably every creature w~~o~~^D pass over a given locality, every creature that is not confined to certain places. The whole army of the woods and hedges marches across a single farm in twelve

months. A single tree—especially an old tree—is visited by four-fifths of the birds that ever perch in the course of that period. Every year, too, brings something fresh, and adds new visitors to the list. Even the wild sea birds are found inland, and some that scarce seem able to fly at all are cast far ashore by the gales.

It is difficult to believe that one would not see more by extending the journey, but, in fact, experience proves that the longer a single locality is studied the more is found in it. But you should know the places in winter as well as in tempting summer, when song and shade and colour attract every one to the field. You should face the mire and slippery path. Nature yields nothing to the sybarite. The meadow glows with buttercups in spring, the hedges are green, the woods lovely ; but these are not to be enjoyed in their full significance unless you have traversed the same places when bare, and have watched the slow fulfilment of the flowers.

The moist leaves that remain upon the mounds do not rustle, and the thrush moves among them unheard. The sunshine may bring out a rabbit, feeding along the slope of the mound, following the paths or runs. He picks his way, he does not like wet. Though out at night in the dewy grass of summer, in the rain-soaked grass of winter, and living all his

life in the earth, often damp nearly to his burrows, no time, and no succession of generations can make him like wet. He endures it, but he picks his way round the dead fern and the decayed leaves. He sits in the bunches of long grass, but he does not like the drops of rain or dew on it to touch him. Water lays his fur close and mats it, instead of running off and leaving him sleek.

As he hops a little way at a time on the mound he chooses his route almost as we pick ours in the mud and pools of February. By the shore of the ditch there still stand a few dry, dead dock stems, with some dry reddish-brown seed adhering. Some dry brown nettle stalks remain, some grey and broken thistles, some teazles leaning on the bushes. The power of winter has reached its utmost now, and can go no further. These bines which still hang in the bushes are those of the greater bindweed, and will be used in a month or so by many birds as conveniently curved to fit about their nests. The stem of wild clematis, grey and bowed, could scarcely look more dead. Fibres are peeling from it, they come off at the touch of the fingers. The few brown feathers that perhaps still adhere where the flowers once were are stained and discoloured by the beating of the rain. It is not dead, it will flourish again ere long. It is the sturdiest of creepers, facing the



G. H. F. 1888

ferocious winds of the hills, the tremendous rains that blow up from the sea, and bitter frost, if only it can get its roots into soil that suits it. In some places it takes the place of the hedge proper and becomes itself the hedge. Many of the trunks of the elms are swathed in minute green vegetation which has flourished in the winter, as the clematis will in the summer.

Of all, the brambles bear the wild works of winter best. Given only a little shelter, in the corner of the hedges or under trees and copses, they retain green leaves till the buds burst again. The frosts tint them in autumn with crimson, but not all turn colour or fall. The brambles are the bowers of the birds ; in these still leafy bowers they do the courting of the spring, and under the brambles the earliest arum, and cleaver, or avens, push up. Round about them the first white nettle flowers, not long now ; latest too, in the autumn. The white nettle sometimes blooms so soon (always according to locality), and again so late, that there seems but a brief interval between, as if it flowered nearly all the year round. So the berries on the holly if let alone often stay till summer is in, and new berries begin to appear shortly afterwards. The ivy, too, bears its berries far into the summer. Perhaps, if the country be taken at large, there is never a time when there is

not a flower of some kind out, in this or that warm southern nook. The sun never sets, nor do the flowers ever die. There is life always, even in the dry fir-cone that looks so brown and sapless.

III

The path crosses the uplands where the lapwings stand on the parallel ridges of the ploughed field like a drilled company ; if they rise they wheel as one, and in the twilight move across the fields in bands, invisible as they sweep near the ground, but seen against the sky in rising over the trees and the hedges. There is a plantation of fir and ash on the slope, and a narrow waggon-way enters it, and seems to lose itself in the wood. Always approach this spot quietly, for whatever is in the wood is sure at some time or other to come to the open space of the track. Wood-pigeons, pheasants, squirrels, magpies, hares, everything feathered or furred, down to the mole, is sure to seek the open way. Butterflies flutter through the copse by it in summer, just as you or I might use the passage between the trees.

Towards the evening the partridges may run through to join their friends before roost-time on the ground. Or you may see a covey there now and then, creeping slowly with humped backs, and at a distance not unlike hedgehogs in their motions.

The spot therefore should be approached with care ; if it is only a thrush out it is a pleasure to see him at his ease and, as he deems, unobserved. If a bird or animal thinks itself noticed it seldom does much, some will cease singing immediately they are looked at. The day is perceptibly longer already. As the sun goes down, the western sky often takes a lovely green tint in this month, and one stays to look at it, forgetting the dark and miry way homewards. I think the moments when we forget the mire of the world are the most precious. After a while the green corn rises higher out of the rude earth.

Pure colour almost always gives the idea of fire, or rather it is perhaps as if a light shone through as well as colour itself. The fresh green blade of corn is like this, so pellucid, so clear and pure in its green as to seem to shine with colour. It is not brilliant—not a surface gleam or an enamel—it is stained through. Beside the moist clods the slender flags arise filled with the sweetness of the earth. Out of the darkness under—that darkness which knows no day save when the ploughshare opens its chinks—they have come to the light. To the light they have brought a colour which will attract the sunbeams from now till harvest. They fall more pleasantly on the corn, toned, as if they mingled with it. Seldom do we realise that the world is practically no thicker

to us than the print of our footsteps on the path. Upon that surface we walk and act our comedy of life, and what is beneath is nothing to us. But it is out from that under-world, from the dead and the unknown, from the cold moist ground, that these green blades have sprung. Yonder a steam-plough pants up the hill, groaning with its own strength, yet all that strength and might of wheels and piston and chains cannot drag from the earth one single blade like these. Force cannot make it ; it must grow —an easy word to speak or write, in fact full of potency.

It is this mystery of growth and life, of beauty, and sweetness, and colour, starting forth from the clods that give the corn its power over me. Somehow I identify myself with it ; I live again as I see it. Year by year it is the same, and when I see it I feel that I have once more entered on a new life. And I think the spring, with its green corn, its violets, and hawthorn leaves, and increasing song, grows yearly dearer and more dear to this our ancient earth. So many centuries have flown ! Now it is the manner with all natural things to gather as it were by smallest particles. The merest grain of sand drifts unseen into a crevice, and by-and-by another ; after a while there is a heap, a century and it is a mound, and then every one observes and com-

ments on it. Time itself has gone on like this ; the years have accumulated, first in drifts, then in heaps, and now a vast mound, to which the mountains are knolls, rises up and overshadows us. Time lies heavy on the world. The old, old earth is glad to turn from the care and care of drifted centuries to the first sweet blades of green.

There is sunshine to-day after rain, and every lark is singing. Across the vale a broad cloud-shadow descends the hillside, is lost in the hollow, and presently, without warning, slips over the edge, coming swiftly along the green tips. The sunshine follows—the warmer for its momentary absence. Far, far down in a grassy coomb stands a solitary cornrick, conical roofed, casting a lonely shadow—marked because so solitary, and beyond it on the rising slope is a brown copse. The leafless branches take a brown tint in the sunlight ; on the summit above there is furze ; then more hill lines drawn against the sky. In the tops of the dark pines at the corner of the copse, could the glance sustain itself to see them, there are finches warming themselves in the sunbeams. The thick needles shelter them from the current of air, and the sky is bluer above the pines. Their hearts are full already of the happy days to come, when the moss yonder by the beech, and the lichen on the fir-trunk, and the loose

fibres caught in the fork of an unbending bough, shall furnish forth a sufficient mansion for their young. Another broad cloud-shadow, and another warm embrace of sunlight. All the serried ranks of the green corn bow at the word of command as the wind rushes over them.

There is largeness and freedom here. Broad as the down and free as the wind, the thought can roam high over the narrow roofs in the vale. Nature has affixed no bounds to thought. All the palings, and walls, and crooked fences deep down yonder are artificial. The fetters and traditions, the routine, the dull roundabout which deadens the spirit like the cold moist earth, are the merest nothings. Here it is easy with the physical eye to look over the highest roof. The moment the eye of the mind is filled with the beauty of things natural, an equal freedom and width of view come to it. Step aside from the trodden footpath of personal experience, throwing away the petty cynicism born of petty hopes disappointed. Step out upon the broad down beside the green corn, and let its freshness become part of life.

The wind passes, and it bends—let the wind, too, pass over the spirit. From the cloud-shadow it emerges to the sunshine—let the heart come out from the shadow of roofs to the open glow of the

sky. High above, the songs of the larks fall as rain—receive it with open hands. Pure is the colour of the green flags, the slender-pointed blades—let the thought be pure as the light that shines through that colour. Broad are the downs and open the aspect—gather the breadth and largeness of view. Never can that view be wide enough and large enough, there will always be room to aim higher. As the air of the hills enriches the blood, so let the presence of these beautiful things enrich the inner sense. One memory of the green corn, fresh beneath the sun and wind, will lift up the heart from the clods.

RICHARD JEFFERIES.



A DUTCH FAMILY

IT was past the middle of the fifteenth century. Louis XI. was sovereign of France; Edward IV. was wrongful king of England; and Philip "the Good," having by force and cunning dispossessed his cousin Jacqueline, and broken her heart, reigned undisturbed this many years in Holland, where our tale begins.

Elias, and Catherine his wife, lived in the little town of Tergou. He traded, wholesale and retail, in cloth, silk, brown holland, and, above all, in curried leather, a material highly valued by the middling people, because it would stand twenty years' wear, and turn an ordinary knife, no small virtue in a jerkin of that century, in which folk were so liberal of their steel; even at dinner a man would leave his meat awhile, and carve you, his neighbour, on a very moderate difference of opinion.

The couple were well-to-do, and would have been free from all earthly care, but for nine children. When these were coming into the world, each was hailed with rejoicings; and when parents and children were all young together, the latter were looked upon as lovely little playthings invented by

Heaven for the amusement, joy, and evening solace of people in business.

But as the olive-branches shot up, and the parents grew older, and saw with their own eyes the fate of large families, misgivings and care mingled with their love. They belonged to a singularly wise and provident people ; in Holland reckless parents were as rare as disobedient children. So now when the huge loaf came in on a gigantic trencher, looking like a fortress in its moat, and, the tour of the table once made, seemed to have melted away, Elias and Catherine would look at one another and say, " Who is to find bread for them all when we are gone ? "

At this observation the younger ones needed all their filial respect to keep their little Dutch countenances ; for in their opinion dinner and supper came by nature like sunrise and sunset, and so long as that luminary should travel round the earth, so long *must* the brown loaf go round their family circle, and set in their stomachs only to rise again in the family oven. But the remark awakened the national thoughtfulness of the elder boys, and being often repeated, set several of the family thinking, some of them good thoughts, some ill thoughts, according to the nature of the thinkers.

" Kate, the children grow so, this table will soon be too small."

"We cannot afford it, Eli," replied Catherine, answering not his words, but his thoughts, after the manner of women.

Their anxiety for the future took at times a less dismal but more mortifying turn. The free burghers had their pride as well as the nobles ; and these two could not bear that any of their blood should go down in the burgh after their decease.

So by prudence and self-denial they managed to clothe all the little bodies, and feed all the great mouths, and yet put by a small hoard to meet the future ; and, as it grew and grew, they felt a pleasure the miser hoarding for himself knows not.

One day the eldest boy but one, aged nineteen, came to his mother, and, with that outward composure which has so misled some persons as to the real nature of this people, begged her to intercede with his father to send him to Amsterdam, and place him with a merchant. "It is the way of life that likes me : merchants are wealthy ; I am good at numbers ; prithee, good mother, take my part in this, and I shall ever be, as I am now, your debtor."

Catherine threw up her hands with dismay and incredulity. "What ! leave Tergou ! "

"What is one street to me more than another ? If I can leave the folk of Tergou, I can surely leave the stones."

"What! quit your poor father now he is no longer young?"

"Mother, if I can leave you, I can leave him."

"What! leave your poor brothers and sisters, that love you so dear?"

"There are enough in the house without me."

"What mean you, Richart? Who is more thought of than you? Stay, have I spoken sharp to you? Have I been unkind to you?"

"Never that I know of; and if you had, you should never hear of it from me. Mother," said Richart gravely, but the tear was in his eye, "it all lies in a word, and nothing can change my mind. There will be one mouth less for you to feed."

"There now, see what my tongue has done," said Catherine, and the next moment she began to cry. For she saw her first young bird on the edge of the nest trying his wings to fly into the world. Richart had a calm, strong will, and she knew he never wasted a word.

It ended as nature has willed all such discourse shall end: young Richart went to Amsterdam with a face so long and sad as it had never been seen before, and a heart like granite.

That afternoon at supper there was one mouth less. Catherine looked at Richart's chair and wept bitterly. On this Elias shouted roughly and angrily

to the children, "Sit wider, can't ye; sit wider!" and turned his head away over the back of his seat awhile, and was silent.

Richart was launched, and never cost them another penny ; but to fit him out and place him in the house of Vander Stegen, the merchant, took all the little hoard but one gold crown. They began again. Two years passed, Richart found a niche in commerce for his brother Jacob, and Jacob left Tergou directly after dinner, which was at eleven in the forenoon. At supper that day Elias remembered what had happened the last time ; so it was in a low whisper he said, "Sit wider, dears!" Now, until that moment, Catherine *would* not see the gap at table, for her daughter Catherine had besought her not to grieve to-night, and she had said, "No, sweetheart, I promise I will not, since it vexes my children." But when Elias whispered, "Sit wider!" says she, "Ay! the table will soon be too big for the children, and you thought it would be too small"; and having delivered this with forced calmness, she put up her apron the next moment, and wept sore.

CHARLES READE.

* * * The picture by Jan Steen on page 2 might have been painted to illustrate this extract.



CHRISTMAS MORNING

WHEN I awoke the next morning, it seemed as if all the events of the preceding evening had been a dream, and nothing but the identity of the ancient chamber convinced me of their reality. While I lay musing on my pillow, I heard the sound of little feet pattering outside of the door, and a whispering consultation. Presently a choir of small voices chanted forth an old Christmas carol, the burden of which was

Rejoice, our Saviour he was born
On Christmas Day in the morning.

I rose softly, slipped on my clothes, opened the door suddenly, and beheld one of the most beautiful little fairy groups that a painter could imagine. It consisted of a boy and two girls, the eldest not more than six, and lovely as seraphs. They were going the rounds of the house, and singing at every chamber-door; but my sudden appearance frightened them into mute bashfulness. They remained for a moment playing on their lips with little fingers, and now and then stealing a shy glance from under their eyebrows, until, as if by one impulse, they scampered away, and as they turned an angle of the gallery, I heard them laughing in triumph at their escape.

Everything conspired to produce kind and happy feelings in this stronghold of old-fashioned hospitality. The window of my chamber looked out upon what in summer would have been a beautiful landscape. There was a sloping lawn, a fine stream winding at the foot of it, and a tract of park beyond, with noble clumps of trees and herds of deer. At a distance was a neat hamlet, with the smoke from the cottage chimneys hanging over it, and a church with its dark spire in strong relief against the clear

cold sky. The house was surrounded with evergreens, according to the English custom, which would have given almost an appearance of summer, but the morning was extremely frosty ; the light vapour of the preceding evening had been precipitated by the cold, and covered all the trees and every blade of grass with its fine crystallisations. The rays of a bright morning sun had a dazzling effect among the glittering foliage. A robin, perched upon the top of a mountain-ash that hung its clusters of red berries just before my window, was basking himself in the sunshine, and piping a few querulous notes ; and a peacock was displaying all the glories of his train, and strutting with the pride and gravity of a Spanish grandee on the terrace-walk below.

I had scarcely dressed myself, when a servant appeared to invite me to family prayers. He showed me the way to a small chapel in the old wing of the house, where I found the principal part of the family already assembled in a kind of gallery, furnished with cushions, hassocks, and large prayer-books ; the servants were seated on benches below. The old gentleman read prayers from a desk in front of the gallery, and Master Simon acted as clerk, and made the responses ; and I must do him the justice to say that he acquitted himself with great gravity and decorum. The service was followed by a Christmas

carol, which Mr. Bracebridge himself had constructed from a poem of his favourite author, Herrick ; and it had been adapted to an old church melody by Master Simon. As there were several good voices among the household, the effect was extremely pleasing ; but I was particularly gratified by the exaltation of heart, and sudden sally of grateful feeling, with which the worthy Squire delivered one stanza, his eyes glistening, and his voice rambling out of all the bounds of time and tune :

'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
 With guiltlesse mirth,
 And giv'st me wassaile bowles to drink,
 Spiced to the brink :
 Lord, 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand
 That soiles my land ;
 And giv'st me for my bushell sowne,
 Twice ten for one.

I afterwards understood that early morning service was read on every Sunday and saint's day through-



out the year, either by Mr. Bracebridge or by some member of the family. It was once almost universally the case at the seats of the nobility and gentry of England, and it is much to be regretted that the custom is fallen into neglect ; for the dullest observer must be sensible of the order and serenity prevalent in those households where the occasional exercise of a beautiful form of worship in the morning gives, as it were, the key-note to every temper for the day, and attunes every spirit to harmony.

Our breakfast consisted of what the Squire denominated true old English fare. He indulged in some bitter lamentations over modern breakfasts of tea-and-toast, which he censured as among the causes of modern effeminacy and weak nerves, and the decline of old English heartiness ; and though he admitted them to his table to suit the palates of his guests, yet there was a brave display of cold meats, wine, and ale, on the sideboard.

After breakfast I walked about the grounds with Frank Bracebridge and Master Simon, or Mr. Simon as he was called by everybody but the Squire. We were escorted by a number of gentleman-like dogs, that seemed loungers about the establishment, from the frisking spaniel to the steady old staghound, the last of which was of a race that had been in the family time out of mind ; they were all obedient to



a dog-whistle which hung to Master Simon's button-hole, and in the midst of their gambols would glance an eye occasionally upon a small switch he carried in his hand.

The old mansion had a still more venerable look in the yellow sunshine than by pale moonlight ; and I could not but feel the force of the Squire's idea, that the formal terraces, heavily moulded balustrades, and clipped yew-trees, carried with them an air of proud aristocracy. There appeared to be an unusual number of peacocks about the place, and I was making some remarks upon what I termed a flock of them, that were basking under a sunny wall,

when I was gently corrected in my phraseology by Master Simon, who told me that, according to the most ancient and approved treatise on hunting, I must say a *muster* of peacocks. "In the same way," added he, with a slight air of pedantry, "we say a flight of doves or swallows, a bevy of quails, a herd of deer, of wrens, or cranes, a skulk of foxes, or a building of rooks." He went on to inform me, that, according to Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, we ought to ascribe to this bird "both understanding and glory; for being praised, he will presently set up his tail chiefly against the sun, to the intent you may the better behold the beauty thereof. But at the fall of the leaf, when his tail falleth, he will mourn and hide himself in corners, till his tail come again as it was."

I could not help smiling at this display of small erudition on so whimsical a subject; but I found that the peacocks were birds of some consequence at the Hall, for Frank Bracebridge informed me that they were great favourites with his father, who was extremely careful to keep up the breed, partly because they belonged to chivalry, and were in great request at the stately banquets of the olden time, and partly because they had a pomp and magnificence about them, highly becoming an old family mansion. Nothing, he was accustomed to

say, had an air of greater state and dignity than a peacock perched upon an antique stone balustrade.

Master Simon had now to hurry off, having an appointment at the parish church with the village choristers, who were to perform some music of his selection. There was something extremely agreeable in the cheerful flow of animal spirits of the little man, and I confess I had been somewhat surprised at his apt quotations from authors who certainly were not in the range of every-day reading. As to his songs, they were chiefly picked out of old books in the Squire's library, and adapted to tunes that were popular among the choice spirits of the last century. His practical application of scraps of literature, however, had caused him to be looked upon as a prodigy of book-knowledge by all the grooms, huntsmen, and small sportsmen of the neighbourhood.

While we were talking we heard the distant toll of the village bell, and I was told that the Squire was a little particular in having his household at church on a Christmas morning, considering it a day of pouring out of thanks and rejoicing, for, as old Tusser observed,

At Christmas be merry, *and thankful withal,*
And feast thy poor neighbours, the great and the
small.



"If you are disposed to go to church," said Frank Bracebridge, "I can promise you a specimen of my cousin Simon's musical achievements. As the church is destitute of an organ, he has formed a band from the village amateurs, and established a musical club for their improvement; he has also sorted a choir, as he sorted my father's pack of hounds; for the bass he has sought out all the 'deep solemn mouths,' and for the tenor the 'loud ringing mouths,' among the country bumpkins, and for 'sweet mouths,' he has culled with curious taste among the prettiest lasses in the neighbourhood; though these last, he affirms, are the most difficult to keep in tune,

your pretty female singer being exceedingly wayward and capricious, and very liable to accident."

As the morning, though frosty, was remarkably fine and clear, the most of the family walked to the church, which was a very old building of gray stone, and stood near a village, about half-a-mile from the park gate. Adjoining it was a low snug parsonage, which seemed coeval with the church. The front of it was perfectly matted with a yew-tree that had been trained against its walls, through the dense foliage of which apertures had been formed to admit light into the small antique lattices. As we passed this sheltered nest the parson issued forth and preceded us.

I had expected to see a sleek well-conditioned pastor, such as is often found in a snug living in the vicinity of a rich patron's table; but I was disappointed. The parson was a little, meagre, black-looking man, with a grizzled wig that was too wide, and stood off from each ear, so that his head seemed to have shrunk away within it like a dried filbert in its shell. He wore a rusty coat, with great skirts, and pockets that would have held the church Bible and prayer-book; and his small legs seemed still smaller, from being planted in large shoes decorated with enormous buckles.

I was informed by Frank Bracebridge that the

parson had been a chum of his father's at Oxford, and had received this living shortly after the latter had come to his estate. He was a complete black-letter hunter, and would scarcely read a work printed in the Roman character. The editions of Caxton and Wynkin de Worde were his delight, and he was indefatigable in his researches after such old English writers as have fallen into oblivion from their worthlessness. He had pored over these old volumes so intensely that they seemed to have been reflected into his countenance indeed ; which, if the face be an index of the mind, might be compared to a title-page of black letter.

On reaching the church-porch we found the parson rebuking the gray-headed sexton for having used mistletoe among the greens with which the church was decorated. It was, he observed, an unholy plant, profaned by having been used by the Druids in their mystic ceremonies ; and though it might be innocently employed in the festive ornamenting of halls and kitchens, yet it had been deemed by the Fathers of the Church as unhallowed, and totally unfit for sacred purposes. So tenacious was he on this point, that the poor sexton was obliged to strip down a great part of the humble trophies of his taste before the parson would consent to enter upon the service of the day.



The interior of the church was venerable but simple ; on the walls were several mural monuments of the Bracebridges, and just beside the altar was a tomb of ancient workmanship, on which lay the effigy of a warrior in armour, with his legs crossed, a sign of his having been a crusader. I was told it was one of the family who had signalised himself in the Holy Land, and the same whose picture hung over the fireplace in the hall.

During service, Master Simon stood up in the pew and repeated the responses very audibly, evincing that kind of ceremonious devotion punctually observed by a gentleman of the old school, and a man of old family connections. I observed, too, that he turned over the leaves of a folio prayer-book with something of a flourish, possibly to show off an enormous seal-ring which enriched one of his fingers, and which had the look of a family relic. But he was evidently most solicitous about the musical part of the service, keeping his eye fixed intently on the choir, and beating time with much gesticulation and emphasis.

The orchestra was in a small gallery, and presented a most whimsical grouping of heads piled one above the other, among which I particularly noticed that of the village tailor, a pale fellow with a retreating forehead and chin, who played on the

clarionet, and seemed to have blown his face to a point ; and there was another, a short pursy man, stooping and labouring at a bass viol, so as to show nothing but the top of a round bald head, like the egg of an ostrich. There were two or three pretty faces among the female singers, to which the keen air of a frosty morning had given a bright rosy tint ; but the gentlemen choristers had evidently been chosen, like old Cremona fiddles, more for tone than looks, and as several had to sing from the same book, there were clusterings of odd physiognomies, not unlike those groups of cherubs we sometimes see on country tombstones.

The usual services of the choir were managed tolerably well, the vocal parts generally lagging a little behind the instrumental, and some loitering fiddler now and then making up for lost time by travelling over a passage with prodigious celerity, and clearing more bars than the keenest fox-hunter to be in at the death. But the great trial was an anthem that had been prepared and arranged by Master Simon, and on which he had founded great expectation. Unluckily there was a blunder at the very outset ; the musicians became flurried, Master Simon was in a fever, everything went on lamely and irregularly until they came to a chorus beginning, “ Now let us sing with one accord,” which seemed to

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clarionet, and seemed to have blown his face to a point ; and there was another, a short pursy man, stooping and labouring at a bass viol, so as to show nothing but the top of a round bald head, like the egg of an ostrich. There were two or three pretty faces among the female singers, to which the keen air of a frosty morning had given a bright rosy tint ; but the gentlemen choristers had evidently been chosen, like old Cremona fiddles, more for tone than looks, and as several had to sing from the same book, there were clusterings of odd physiognomies, not unlike those groups of cherubs we sometimes see on country tombstones.

The usual services of the choir were managed tolerably well, the vocal parts generally lagging a little behind the instrumental, and some loitering fiddler now and then making up for lost time by travelling over a passage with prodigious celerity, and clearing more bars than the keenest fox-hunter to be in at the death. But the great trial was an anthem that had been prepared and arranged by Master Simon, and on which he had founded great expectation. Unluckily there was a blunder at the very outset ; the musicians became flurried, Master Simon was in a fever, everything went on lamely and irregularly until they came to a chorus beginning, “ Now let us sing with one accord,” which seemed to



be a signal for parting company : all became discord and confusion, each shifted for himself, and got to the end as well, or rather as soon, as he could, excepting one old chorister in a pair of horn spectacles bestriding and pinching a long sonorous nose, who, happening to stand a little apart, and being wrapped up in his own melody, kept on a quavering course, wriggling his head, ogling his book, and winding all up by a nasal solo of at least three bars' duration.

The parson gave us a most erudite sermon on the rites and ceremonies of Christmas, and the propriety of observing it not merely as a day of thanksgiving, but of rejoicing ; supporting the correctness of his opinions by the earliest usages of the Church, and enforcing them by the authorities of Theophilus of Cesarea, St. Cyprian, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and a cloud more of Saints and Fathers, from whom he made copious quotations. I was a little at a loss to perceive the necessity of such a mighty array of forces to maintain a point which no one present seemed inclined to dispute ; but I soon found that the good man had a legion of ideal adversaries to contend with, having, in the course of his researches on the subject of Christmas, got completely embroiled in the sectarian controversies of the Revolution, when the Puritans made such a fierce assault upon the ceremonies of the Church, and poor old

Christmas was driven out of the land by proclamation of parliament. The worthy parson lived but with times past, and knew but a little of the present.

Shut up among worm-eaten tomes in the retirement of his antiquated little study, the pages of old times were to him as the gazettes of the day, while the era of the Revolution was mere modern history. He forgot that nearly two centuries had elapsed since the fiery persecution of poor mince-pie throughout the land, when plum-porridge was denounced as "mere popery," and roast beef as anti-christian; and that Christmas had been brought in again triumphantly with the merry court of King Charles at the Restoration. He kindled into warmth with the ardour of his contest, and the host of imaginary foes with whom he had to combat; had a stubborn conflict with old Prynne and two or three other forgotten champions of the Roundheads, on the subject of Christmas festivity; and concluded by urging his hearers, in the most solemn and affecting manner, to stand to the traditionary customs of their fathers, and feast and make merry on this joyful anniversary of the Church.

I have seldom known a sermon attended apparently with more immediate effects, for on leaving the church the congregation seemed one and all possessed with the gaiety of spirit so earnestly

enjoined by their pastor. The elder folks gathered in knots in the churchyard, greeting and shaking hands, and the children ran about crying, Ule! Ule! and repeating some uncouth rhymes, which the parson, who had joined us, informed me had been handed down from days of yore. The villagers doffed their hats to the Squire as he passed, giving him the good wishes of the season with every appearance of heartfelt sincerity, and were invited by him to the Hall to take something to keep out the cold of the weather; and I heard blessings uttered by several of the poor, which convinced me that, in the midst of his enjoyments, the worthy old cavalier had not forgotten the true Christmas virtue of charity.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

"But do Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us," chanted the Lector, as he closed the book. And the Prior struck the board, and the brethren arose and returned God thanks for the creatures of food and drink, and for that Earthly Paradise, ever at their door, of tranquil and joyous and strenuous and thankful and humble acceptance of God's will.

WILLIAM CANTON.

THE HOLLY

Now of all the trees by the King's highway,
 Which do you love the best ?
 O ! the one that is green upon Christmas Day,
 The bush with the bleeding breast.
 Now the holly with her drops of blood for me :
 For that is our dear Aunt Mary's tree.

Its leaves are sweet with our Saviour's Name,
 'Tis a plant that loves the poor :
 Summer and winter it shines the same,
 Beside the cottage door.
 O ! the holly with her drops of blood for me :
 For that is our kind Aunt Mary's tree.

'Tis a bush that the birds will never leave :
 They sing in it all day long ;
 But sweetest of all upon Christmas Eve,
 Is to hear the Robin's song.
 'Tis the merriest sound upon earth and sea :
 For it comes from our own Aunt Mary's tree.

So, of all that grow by the King's highway,
I love that tree the best ;
'Tis a bower for the birds upon Christmas Day,
The bush of the bleeding breast.
O ! the holly with her drops of blood for me :
For that is our sweet Aunt Mary's tree.

R. S. HAWKER.





n Hounslow Heath—and close beside the road,

As western travellers may oft have seen,—

A little house some years ago there stood,

A minikin abode ;

And built like Mr. Birkbeck's, all of wood :

The walls of white, the window-shutters green,—

Four wheels it had at North, South, East, and West

(Though now at rest),

On which it used to wander to and fro,

Because its master ne'er maintained a rider,

Like those who trade in Paternoster Row ;
But made his business travel for itself,

Till he had made his pelf,

And then retired—if one may call it so,

Of a roadsider.

Perchance, the very race and constant riot
Of stages, long and short, which thereby ran,
Made him more relish the repose and quiet

Of his now sedentary caravan ;

Perchance, he loved the ground because 'twas
common,

And so he might impale a strip of soil

That furnished, by his toil,

Some dusty greens, for him and his old woman ;—

And five tall hollyhocks, in dingy flower :

Howbeit, the thoroughfare did no ways spoil

His peace, unless, in some unlucky hour,

A stray horse came, and gobbled up his bow'r.

But tired of always looking at the coaches,

The same to come,—when they had seen them one
day!

And, used to brisker life, both man and wife
Began to suffer N U E's approaches,

And feel retirement like a long wet Sunday,—

So, having had some quarters of school breeding,

They turned themselves, like other folks, to reading ;

But setting out where others nigh have done,

And being ripened in the seventh stage,

The childhood of old age,

Began, as other children have begun,—

Not with the pastorals of Mr. Pope,



Or Bard of Hope,
Or Paley ethical, or learned Porson,
But spelt, on Sabbaths, in St. Mark, or John,
And then relax'd themselves with Whittington,

Or Valentine and Orson—
But chiefly fairy tales they loved to con,
And being easily melted in their dotage,
Slobber'd,—and kept
Reading,—and wept

Over the White Cat, in their wooden cottage,

 Thus reading on—the longer

They read, of course, their childish faith grew
 stronger

In Gnomes, and Hags, and Elves, and Giants grim,—

If talking Trees and Birds revealed to him,

She saw the flight of Fairyland's fly-waggons,

 And magic fishes swim

In puddle ponds, and took old crows for dragons,—

Both were quite drunk from the enchanted flagons ;

When as it fell upon a summer's day,

 As the old man sat a feeding

 On the old-babe reading,

Beside his open street-and-parlour door,

 A hideous roar

Proclaimed a drove of beasts was coming by the
 way.

Long-horned, and short, of many a different breed,

Tall, tawny brutes, from famous Lincoln-levels

 Or Durham feed,

With some of those unquiet black dwarf demons

 From nether side of Tweed,

 Or Firth of Forth ;

Looking half wild with joy to leave the North,—

With dusty hides, all mobbing on together,—

When,—whether from a fly's malicious comment

Upon his tender flank, from which he shrank ;

Or whether

Only in some enthusiastic moment,—
However, one brown monster, in a frisk,
Giving his tail a perpendicular whisk,



Kicked out a passage through the noisy rabble;
And after a *pas seul*,—or, if you will, a
Horn-pipe before the basket-maker's villa,

Leapt o'er the tiny pale,—
Pressed his broad flanks against the wooden gable,
And thrust his brawny bell-rope of a tail

Right o'er the page,
Wherein the sage
Just then was spelling some romantic fable.

The old man, half a scholar, half a dunce,
Could not peruse,—who could?—two tales at
once;

And being huffed
At what he knew was none of Riquet's Tuft,
Banged-to the door,
But most unluckily enclosed a morsel
[Of the intruding tail] :—

The monster gave a roar,
And bolting off with speed increased by pain,
The little house became a coach once more,
And, like Macheath, " took to the road " again!
Just then, by fortune's whimsical decree,

[The ancient woman]
Was getting up some household herbs for supper;
Thoughtful of Cinderella, in the tale,
And, quaintly wondering if magic shifts
Could o'er a common pumpkin so prevail,
To turn it to a coach;—what pretty gifts
Might come of cabbages, and curly kale;
Meanwhile she never heard her old man's wail,
Nor turned, till home had turned a corner, quite
Gone out of sight!



At last, conceive her, rising from the ground,
Weary of sitting in her russet clothing,
And looking round
Where rest was to be found,
There was no house—no villa there—no nothing !
No house !
The change was quite amazing ;
It made her senses stagger for a minute,
The riddle's explication seemed to harden ;
But soon her superannuated *nous*

Explain'd the horrid mystery ;—and raising
Her hand to heaven, with the cabbage in it,

On which she meant to sup,—

“ Well ! this *is* Fairy Work ! I'll bet a farden,
Little Prince Silverwings has ketch'd me up,
And set me down in some one else's garden ! ”

THOMAS HOOD.





HANNAH BINT

THE Shaw leading to Hannah Bint's habitation is, as I perhaps have said before, a very pretty mixture of wood and coppice, that is to say, a tract of thirty or forty acres covered with fine growing timber—ash, and oak, and elm, very regularly planted, and interspersed here and there with large patches of underwood, hazel, maple, birch, holly, and hawthorn, woven into almost impenetrable thickets by long wreaths of the bramble, the briony, and the brier-rose, or by the pliant and twisting garlands of the wild honeysuckle. In other parts the Shaw is quite clear of its bosky under-growth, and clothed only with large beds of feathery fern, or carpets of flowers, primroses, orchises, cow-slips, ground-ivy, crane's-bill, cotton-grass, Solomon's seal, and forget-me-not, crowded together with a profusion and brilliancy of colour, such as I have

rarely seen equalled even in a garden. Here the wild hyacinth really enamels the ground with its fresh and lovely purple ; there,

On aged roots, with bright green mosses clad,
Dwells the wood-sorrel, with its bright thin leaves
Heart-shaped and triply folded, and its root
Creeping like beaded coral ; whilst around
Flourish the copse's pride, anemones,
With rays like golden studs on ivory laid
Most delicate, but touch'd with purple clouds,
Fit crown for April's fair but changeful brow.

The variety is much greater than I have enumerated, for the ground is so unequal, now swelling in gentle ascents, now dimpling into dells and hollows, and the soil so different in different parts, that the sylvan Flora is unusually extensive and complete.

The season is, however, now too late for this floweriness ; and except the tufted woodbines, which have continued in bloom during the whole of this lovely autumn, and some lingering garlands of the purple wild vetch, wreathing round the thickets and uniting with the ruddy leaves of the bramble, and the pale festoons of the briony, there is little to call one's attention from the grander beauties of the trees—the sycamore, its broad leaves already spotted—the oak, heavy with acorns—and the delicate

shining rind of the weeping birch, "the lady of the woods," thrown out in strong relief from a background of holly and hawthorn, each studded with coral berries, and backed with old beeches, beginning to assume the rich tawny hue which makes them perhaps the most picturesque of autumnal trees, as the transparent freshness of their young foliage is undoubtedly the choicest ornament of the forest in spring.

A sudden turn round one of these magnificent beeches brings us to the boundary of the Shaw, and leaning upon a rude gate, we look over an open space of about ten acres of ground, still more varied and broken than that which we have passed, and surrounded on all sides by thick woodland. As a piece of colour, nothing can be well finer. The ruddy glow of the heath-flower, contrasting, on the one hand, with the golden-blossomed furze; on the other, with a patch of buck-wheat, of which the bloom is not past, although the grain be ripening—the beautiful buck-wheat, whose transparent leaves and stalks are so brightly tinged with vermillion, while the delicate pink-white of the flower, a paler persicaria, has a feathery fall, at once so rich and so graceful, and a fresh and reviving odour, like that of birch trees in the dew of a May evening. The bank that surmounts this attempt at cultivation is

crowned with the late foxglove and the stately mullein, the pasture of which so great a part of the waste consists, looks as green as an emerald ; a clear pond, with the bright sky reflected in it, lets light into the picture ; the white cottage of the keeper peeps from the opposite coppice ; and the vine-covered dwelling of Hannah Bint rises from amidst the pretty garden, which lies bathed in the sunshine around it.

The living and moving accessories are all in keeping with the cheerfulness and repose of the landscape. Hannah's cow grazing quietly beside the keeper's pony ; a brace of fat pointer puppies holding amicable intercourse with a litter of young pigs ; ducks, geese, cocks, hens, and chickens scattered over the turf ; Hannah herself sallying forth from the cottage-door with her milk-bucket in her hand, and her little brother following with the milking-stool.

My friend, Hannah Bint, is by no means an ordinary person. Her father, Jack Bint (for in all his life he never arrived at the dignity of being called John ; indeed in our parts he was commonly called by the cognomen of London Jack), was a drover of high repute in his profession. No man, between Salisbury Plain and Smithfield, was thought to conduct a flock of sheep so skilfully through all

the difficulties of lanes and commons, streets and high-roads, as Jack Bint, aided by Jack Bint's



famous dog, Watch, for Watch's rough, honest face, black, with a little white about the muzzle, and one white ear, was as well known at fairs and

markets as his master's equally honest and weather-beaten visage. Lucky was the dealer that could secure their services, Watch being renowned for keeping a flock together better than any shepherd's dog on the road—Jack, for delivering them more punctually, and in better condition. No man had a more thorough knowledge of the proper night stations, where good feed might be procured for his charge, and good liquor for Watch and himself, Watch, like other sheep dogs, being accustomed to live chiefly on bread and beer. His master, though not averse to a pot of good double X, preferred gin ; and they who plod slowly along, through wet and weary ways, in frost and in fog, have undoubtedly a stronger temptation to indulge in that cordial and reviving stimulus than we water-drinkers, sitting in warm and comfortable rooms, can readily imagine. For certain, our drover could never resist the gentle seduction of the gin-bottle, and being of a free, merry, jovial temperament, one of those persons commonly called good-fellows, who like to see others happy in the same way with themselves, he was apt to circulate it at his own expense, to the great improvement of his popularity, and the great detriment of his finances.

All this did vastly well whilst his earnings continued proportionate to his spendings, and the little

family at home were comfortably supported by his industry, but when a rheumatic fever came on, one hard winter, and finally settled in his limbs, reducing the most active and hardy man in the parish to the state of a confirmed cripple, then his reckless improvidence stared him in the face ; and poor Jack, a thoughtless, but kind creature, and a most affectionate father, looked at his three motherless children with the acute misery of a parent who has brought those whom he loves best in the world to abject destitution. He found help, where he probably least expected it, in the sense and spirit of his young daughter, a girl of twelve years old.

Hannah was the eldest of the family, and had, ever since her mother's death, which event had occurred two or three years before, been accustomed to take the direction of their domestic concerns, to manage her two brothers, to feed the pigs and the poultry, and to keep house during the almost constant absence of her father. She was a quick, clever lass, of a high spirit, a firm temper, some pride, and a horror of accepting parochial relief, which is every day becoming rarer amongst the peasantry, but which forms the surest safeguard to the sturdy independence of the English character. Our little damsel possessed this quality in perfection, and when her father talked of giving up their comfort-

able cottage, and removing to the workhouse, whilst she and her brothers must go to service, Hannah formed a bold resolution, and without disturbing the sick man by any participation of her hopes and fears, proceeded after settling their trifling affairs to act at once on her own plans and designs.

Careless of the future as the poor drover had seemed, he had yet kept clear of debt, and by subscribing constantly to a benefit club had secured a pittance that might at least assist in supporting him during the long years of sickness and helplessness to which he was doomed to look forward. This his daughter knew. She knew also that the employer in whose service his health had suffered so severely, was a rich and liberal cattle-dealer in the neighbourhood, who would willingly aid an old and faithful servant, and had, indeed, come forward with offers of money. To assistance from such a quarter Hannah saw no objection. Farmer Oakley and the parish were quite distinct things. Of him, accordingly, she asked, not money, but something much more in his own way—"a cow! any cow! old or lame, or what not, so that it were a cow! she would be bound to keep it well; if she did not, he might take it back again. She even hoped to pay for it by and by, by instalments, but that she would not promise!" and, partly amused, partly interested by

the child's earnestness, the wealthy yeoman gave her, not as a purchase, but as a present, a very fine young Alderney. She then went to the lord of the manor, and, with equal knowledge of character, begged his permission to keep her cow on the Shaw common. "Farmer Oakley had given her a fine Alderney, and she would be bound to pay the rent, and keep her father off the parish, if he would only let it graze on the waste"; and he too, half from real good nature—half, not to be outdone in liberality by his tenant, not only granted the requested permission, but reduced the rent so much, that the produce of the vine seldom fails to satisfy their kind landlord.

Now Hannah showed great judgment in setting up as a dairy-woman. She could not have chosen an occupation more completely unoccupied, or more loudly called for. One of the most provoking of the petty difficulties which beset people with a small establishment in this neighbourhood is the trouble, almost the impossibility, of procuring the pastoral luxuries of milk, eggs, and butter, which rank, unfortunately, amongst the indispensable necessities of housekeeping. To your thoroughbred Londoner, who, whilst grumbling over his own breakfast, is apt to fancy that thick cream, and fresh butter, and new-laid eggs, grow, so to say, in the country—form an

actual part of its natural produce—it may be some comfort to learn, that in this great grazing district, however the calves and the farmers may be the better for cows, nobody else is ; that farmers' wives have ceased to keep poultry ; and that we unlucky villagers sit down often to our first meal in a state of destitution, which may well make him content with his thin milk and his Cambridge butter, when compared to our imputed pastoralities.

Hannah's Alderney restored us to one rural privilege. Never was so cleanly a little milkmaid. She changed away some of the cottage finery, which, in his prosperous days, poor Jack had pleased himself with bringing home, the china tea-service, the gilded mugs, and the painted waiters, for the useful utensils of the dairy, and speedily established a regular and gainful trade in milk, eggs, butter, honey, and poultry—for poultry they had always kept.

Her domestic management prospered equally. Her father, who retained the perfect use of his hands, began a manufacture of mats and baskets, which he constructed with great nicety and adroitness. The eldest boy, a sharp and clever lad, cut for him his rushes and osiers, erected under his sister's direction a shed for the cow, and enlarged and cultivated the garden (always with the good leave of her kind patron, the lord of the manor) until it

became so ample, that the produce not only kept the pig and half kept the family, but afforded another branch of merchandise to the indefatigable directress of the establishment. For the younger boy, less quick and active, Hannah contrived to obtain an admission to the charity school, where he made great progress—retaining him at home, however, in the hay-making and leasing season, or whenever his services could be made available, to the great annoyance of the schoolmaster, whose favourite he is, and who piques himself so much on George's scholarship (your heavy, sluggish boy at country work often turns out quick at his book), that it is the general opinion that this much-vaunted pupil will, in process of time, be promoted to the post of assistant, and may, possibly, in the course of years, rise to the dignity of a parish pedagogue in his own person; so that his sister, although still making him useful at odd times, now considers George as pretty well off her hands, whilst his elder brother, Tom, could take an under-gardener's place directly, if he were not too important at home to be spared even for a day.

In short, during the five years that she has ruled at the Shaw cottage, the world has gone well with Hannah Bint. Her cow, her calves, her pigs, her bees, her poultry, have each, in their several ways,

thriven and prospered. She has even brought Watch to like butter-milk, as well as strong beer, and has nearly persuaded her father (to whose wants and wishes she is most anxiously attentive) to accept of milk as a substitute for gin. Not but Hannah hath had her enemies as well as her betters. Why should she not ? The old woman at the lodge, who always piqued herself on being spiteful, and crying down new ways, foretold from the first she would come to no good, and could not forgive her for falsifying her prediction ; and Betty Barnes, the slatternly widow of a tippling farmer, who rented a field, and set up a cow herself, and was universally discarded for insufferable dirt, said all that the wit of an envious woman could devise against Hannah and her Alderney ; nay, even Ned Miles, the keeper, her next neighbour, who had whilom held entire sway over the Shaw common, as well as its coppices, grumbled as much as so good-natured and genial a person could grumble, when he found a little girl sharing his dominion, a cow grazing beside his pony, and vulgar cocks and hens hovering around the buck-wheat, destined to feed his noble pheasants. Nobody that had been accustomed to see that paragon of keepers, so tall and manly, and pleasant looking, with his merry eye, and his knowing smile, striding gaily along, in his green coat, and his gold-

laced hat, with Neptune, his noble Newfoundland dog (a retriever is the sporting word), and his beautiful spaniel, Flirt, at his heels, could conceive how askew he looked when he first found Hannah and Watch holding equal reign over his old territory, the Shaw common.

Yes ! Hannah hath had her enemies, but they are passing away. The old woman at the lodge is dead, poor creature ; and Betty Barnes, having herself taken to tippling, has lost the few friends she once possessed, and looks, luckless wretch, as if she would soon die too !—and the keeper ?—why, he is not dead, or like to die ; but the change that has taken place there is the most astonishing of all—except, perhaps, the change in Hannah herself.

Few damsels of twelve years old, generally a very pretty age, were less pretty than Hannah Bint. Short and stunted in her figure, thin in face, sharp in feature, with a muddled complexion, wild sunburnt hair, and eyes whose very brightness had in them something startling, over-informed, super-subtle, too clever for her age,—at twelve years old she had quite the air of a little old fairy. Now, at seventeen, matters are mended. Her complexion has cleared ; her countenance has developed itself ; her figure has shot up into height and lightness, and a sort of rustic grace ; her bright, acute eye is softened and



sweetened by the womanly wish to please ; her hair is trimmed and curled and brushed with exquisite neatness ; and her whole dress arranged with that nice attention to the becoming, the suitable both in form and texture, which would be called the highest degree of coquetry, if it did not deserve the better name of propriety. Never was such a transmogrification beheld. The lass is really pretty, and Ned Miles has discovered that she is so. There he stands, the rogue, close at her side (for he hath joined her whilst we have been telling her little story, and the milking is over !)—there he stands—holding her milk-pail in one hand, and stroking Watch with the other, whilst she is returning the compliment by patting Neptune's magnificent head. There they stand, as much like lovers as may be, he smiling and she blushing—he never looking so handsome nor she so pretty in all their lives. There they stand, in blessed forgetfulness of all except each other ; as happy a couple as ever trod the earth. There they stand, and one would not disturb them for all the milk and butter in Christendom. I should not wonder if they were fixing the wedding day.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

HERACLES AND HYLAS

HERACLES, the son of Amphitryon, that heart of bronze, who abode the wild lion's onset, loved a lad, beautiful Hylas—Hylas of the braided locks—and he taught him all things as a father teaches his child, all whereby himself became a mighty man, and renowned in minstrelsy. Never was he apart from Hylas, not when mid-noon was high in heaven, not when Dawn with her white horses speeds upwards to the dwelling of Zeus, not when the twittering nestlings look towards the perch, while their mother flaps her wings above the smoke-browned beam; and all this that the lad might be fashioned to his mind, and might drive a straight furrow, and come to the true measure of man.

But when Jason, Aeson's son, was sailing after the fleece of gold (and with him followed the champions, the first chosen out of all the cities, they that were of most avail), to rich Iolcos, too, came the mighty man and adventurous, the son of the woman of Midea, noble Alcmene. With him went down Hylas also, to *Argo* of the goodly benches, the ship that grazed not on the clashing rocks Cyanean, but through she sped and ran into deep Phasis, as an eagle over the mighty gulf of the sea. And the clashing rocks stand fixed, even from that hour !

Now at the rising of the Pleiades, when the upland fields begin to pasture the young lambs, and when spring is already on the wane, then the flower divine of Heroes bethought them of sea-faring. On board the hollow *Argo* they sat down to the oars, and to the Hellespont they came when the south wind had been for three days blowing, and made their haven within Propontis, where the oxen of the Cianes wear bright the ploughshare as they widen the furrows.

Then they went forth upon the shore, and each couple busily got ready supper in the late evening, and many as they were, one bed they strewed lowly on the ground, for they found a meadow lying rich in couches of strown grass and leaves. Thence they cut them pointed flag-leaves and deep marsh-galingale. And Hylas of the yellow hair, with a vessel of bronze in his hand, went to draw water against supper-time for Heracles himself, and the steadfast Telamon, for these comrades twain supped ever at one table. Soon was he ware of a spring in a hollow land, and the rushes grew thickly round it, and dark swallow-wort, and green maiden-hair, and blooming parsley, and deer-grass spreading through the marshy land. In the midst of the water the nymphs were arraying their dances, the sleepless nymphs, dread goddesses of the country people, Eunice and Malis and Nycheia, with her April eyes.

And now the boy was holding out the wide-mouthed pitcher to the water intent on dipping it, but the nymphs all clung to his hand, for love of the Argive lad had fluttered the soft hearts of all of them. Then down he sank into the black water, headlong all, as when a star shoots flaming from the sky, plump in the deep it falls, and a mate shouts out to the seamen, "Up with the gear, my lads, the wind is fair for sailing."

Then the nymphs held the weeping boy on their laps, and with gentle words were striving to comfort him. But the son of Amphitryon was troubled about the lad, and went forth, carrying his bended bow in Scythian fashion, and the club that is ever grasped in his right hand. Thrice he shouted, "Hylas!" as loud as his deep throat could call, and thrice again the boy heard him, and thin came his voice from the water, and, hard by though he was, he seemed very far away. And as when a bearded lion, a ravening lion on the hills, hears the bleating of a fawn afar off, and rushes forth from his lair to seize it, his readiest meal, even so the mighty Heracles, in longing for the lad, sped through the trackless briars and ranged over much country.

Reckless are lovers: great toils did Heracles bear, in hills and thickets wandering, and Jason's quest was all postponed to this. Now the ship

abode with her tackling aloft, and the company gathered there, but at midnight the young men were lowering the sails again, awaiting Heracles. But he wheresoever his feet might lead him went wandering in his fury, for the cruel Goddess of love was rending his heart within him.

Thus loveliest Hylas is numbered with the Blessed, but for a runaway they girded at Heracles, the heroes, because he roamed from *Argo* of the sixty oarsmen.

THEOCRITUS, translated by ANDREW LANG.

And I too sing the song of all creation,—
A brave sky and a glad wind blowing by,
A clear trail, and an hour for meditation,
A long day and the joy to make it fly ;
A hard task and the muscle to achieve it,
A fierce noon, and a well-contented gloam,
A good strife, and no great regret to leave it,
A still night and the far red lights of home.

ANON.

GRACE FOR LIGHT

WHEN we were little childer we had a quare wee
house,

Away up in the heather by the head of Brabla' burn ;
The hares we'd see them scootin', an' we'd hear the
crowin' grouse,

An' when we'd all be in at night ye'd not get room
to turn.

The youngest two She'd put to bed, their faces to
the wall,

An' the lave of us could sit aroun' just anywhere we
might ;

Herself 'ud take the rush-dip an' light it for us all,
An' "*God be thanked !*" She would say, "*now we
have a light.*"

Then we be to quet the laughin' an' pushin' on the
floor,

An' think on One who called us to come and be
forgiven ;

Himself 'ud put his pipe down, an' say the good word
more,

"*May the Lamb o' God lead us all to the Light o'
Heaven !*"

There' a wheen things that used to be an' now has
had their day,
The nine Glens of Antrim can show ye many a
sight,
But not the quare wee house where we lived up
Brabla' way,
Nor a child in all the nine Glens that knows the
grace for light.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

This is the true nature of the home—it is a place
of Peace ; the shelter, not only from all injury, but
from all terror, doubt, and division. In so far as it
is not this, it is not home : it is then only a part of
the outer world which you have roofed over and
lighted a fire in.

JOHN RUSKIN.



The inhabitant speaks :



UR village, that's to say, not Miss Mitford's
village, but our village of Bullock's Smithy,
Is come into by an avenue of trees, three
oak pollards, two elders, and a withy ;
And in the middle there's a green, of about not
exceeding an acre and a half ;
It's common to all and fed off by nineteen cows, six
ponies, three horses, five asses, two foals, seven
pigs, and a calf !
Besides a pond in the middle, which is held by a sort
of common law lease,
And contains twenty ducks, six drakes, three ganders,

two dead dogs, four drowned kittens, and twelve geese.

Of course the green's cropt very close, and does famous for bowling when the little village boys play at cricket ;

Only some horse, or pig, or cow, or great jackass, is sure to come and stand right before the wicket.

There's fifty-five private houses, let alone barns and workshops, and pigsties, and poultry huts, and such-like sheds,

With plenty of public-houses—two Foxes, one Green Man, three Bunch of Grapes, one Crown, and six King's Heads.

The Green Man is reckoned the best, as the only one that for love or money can raise

A postilion, a blue jacket, two deplorable lame white horses, and a ramshackle "neat postchaise" !

There's one parish church for all the people, whatsoever may be their ranks in life or their degrees,

Except one very damp, small, dark, freezing cold, little Methodist Chapel of Ease ;

And close by the churchyard, there's a stonemason's yard, that when the time is seasonable

Will furnish with "afflictions sore" and marble urns and cherubims, very low and reasonable.

There's a cage comfortable enough ; I've been in it with Old Jack Jeffery and Tom Pike ;



For the Green Man next door will send you in ale,
gin, or anything else you like.

I can't speak of the stocks, as nothing remains of
them but the upright post ;

But the pound is kept in repairs for the sake of Cob's
horse as is always there almost.

There's a smithy of course, where that queer sort of
a chap in his way, Old Joe Bradley,

Perpetually hammers and stammers, for he stutters
and shoes horses very badly.

There's a shop of all sorts that sells everything, kept
by the widow of Mr. Task ;

But when you go there it's ten to one she's out of
everything you ask.

You'll know her house by the swarm of boys, like
flies, about the old sugary cask :

There are six empty houses and not so well papered
inside as out,

For bill-stickers won't beware, but stick notices of
sales and election placards all about.

That's the Doctor's with a green door, where the
garden pots in the window is seen ;

A weakly monthly rose that don't blow, and a dead
geranium, and a teaplant with five black leaves,
and one green.

As for hollyhocks at the cottage doors, and honey-
suckles and jasmines, you may go and whistle ;

But the Tailor's front garden grows two cabbages, a
dock, a ha'porth of pennyroyal, two dandelions,
and a thistle !

There are three small orchards—Mr. Busby's the
schoolmaster's is the chief—

With two pear trees that don't bear ; one plum, and
an apple that every year is stripped by a
thief.

There's another small day-school too, kept by the
respectable Mrs. Gaby,

A select establishment for six little boys, and one
big, and four little girls and a baby ;



There's a rectory with pointed gables and strange odd
chimneys that never smokes,
For the Rector don't live on his living like other
Christian sort of folks ;
There's a barber's once a week well filled with rough
black-bearded, shock-headed churls,
And a window with two feminine men's heads, and
two masculine ladies in false curls ;

There's a butcher, and a carpenter's, and a plumber,
 and a small greengrocer's, and a baker,
 But he won't bake on a Sunday ; and there's a
 sexton that's a coal merchant besides, and an
 undertaker ;
 And a toyshop, but not a whole one, for a village
 can't compare with the London shops ;
 One window sells drums, dolls, kites, carts, bats,
 Clout's balls, and the other sells malt and hops.
 And Mrs. Brown in domestic economy not to be a
 bit behind her betters,
 Lets her house to a milliner, a watchmaker, a rat-
 catcher, a cobbler, lives in it herself, and it's
 the post-office for letters.
 Now I've gone through all the village—ay, from end
 to end, save and except one more house,
 But I haven't come to that—and I hope I never
 shall—and that's the village Poor House !

THOMAS HOOD.

I don't care how much or how little money you
 make ; I want you to understand that there's only
 one place in the world where you can live a happy
 life, and that's inside your income.

GORDON GRAHAM.

THE TROUBLE-HUNTERS

LEANING hard over against the driving sleet and pushing against the wind as though it were a great load, three men were beating their way into the teeth of a blizzard, on the top of the Rocky Mountains. Icicles hung from their moustaches, and in front of their faces they carried shovels that they might breathe. Underfoot the snows packed hard as marble, and at each step the wind threatened to take their feet from under the men. At a distance of twelve feet they were invisible to one another, and they kept their uncertain course by following the tops of telephone poles which stuck out two or three feet from the level of the snow.

All day they had been battling with the elements to repair a few little breaks in a telephone wire and, having done it, they had spent an hour pushing back a scant half-mile against the gale. A mile more and they would reach the bunk-house, with its red-hot stove and steaming coffee ; but chests and muscles ached, and the increasing gloom told of coming night.

Suddenly one of them pulled up close to his companion and yelled into his ear, "Where's Jack?" Jack had been in the rear and, as they thought, just behind them. They yelled singly and in unison, but the wind whipped the calls into miles of roaring

space and howled in derision. Once or twice they thought they heard an answer, but following it they found nothing. Back and forth along the line they hunted—venturing away from the poles into the stabbing fury of that driving white—living through ages of suspense when the course of the poles was lost or they separated from one another in trying to pick out the pole next ahead. In an hour the search was abandoned and the fight for the bunk-house resumed.

Next morning they found a wild-eyed wreck of a man lying, mute but conscious, under a railroad bridge. He had walked all night to keep from freezing to death, and was wholly exhausted. Before he could be carried to the hospital his frozen face was swollen terribly, and he was conscious only at intervals. And yet in ten days the iron constitution of this man Jack had made him well again, and he was back on the job—crippled, but as full of fight as ever.

This is a sample bit—and not an exceptional one—of the life of the mountain trouble-hunter. From the nature of his profession—and the fact that the great storms bring down the wires and call him out in the open—the life of any trouble-man is a hard one. But when this fellow is guardian and trustee of wires that wander about irresponsibly through the

snow-filled gulches of the mountains and the bleak stretches of the wilderness, he has work cut out for him that calls for manhood.

The economic development which has pushed the telephone out to the farthermost edges of the frontier—hung it in the Indian wigwam, the trading post, and isolated ranch-house—is one of the most startling phases of the marvellous development of our great West. This development has taken the transmission lines over miles of storm-blighted wilderness, which man had heretofore avoided, and it has again brought to the men who maintain these lines the old battle with the “everlasting way” of nature and the wilderness.

It has made of them one of the hardest, most picturesque, and resourceful out-of-door types that we have to-day—a type that is full of the fibre which made frontier history. The stamping-ground of the old trapper—which, by the way, he usually vacated in winter to drop down into the settlements and hibernate—is now the haunt of the line patrolman. When the picturesque “cow-punch,” who has herded into fiction lately, is steaming his boots by the fire or feeding his stock from hay-ricks, the trouble-hunter is hiking off for a few days’ fight with the storm.

Occasionally there creeps into the newspapers a

story of a lineman being brought in with frozen feet, or of his having been burnt by the current, but very little is generally known of the hardy, heroic work these men do in the line of duty—of men who wander snow-blind over the mountains, are snowed up in old abandoned cabins with the mountain rats for bed-fellows—of men who can spend a week of the worst winter weather travelling deep snow, dependent on themselves alone.

The best of these men do not get snow-blind nor freeze their feet nor lose themselves—from hard experience they have learned to avoid these things. Their resourcefulness is unlimited. By starting it in a hat with a match, a candle, and a few shavings, they can build a fire in spite of any wind that blows. They can improvise a first-class snow-shoe from willows, can ride skis double, or can burrow in the snow and keep warm where a coyote would not. There are "snow-men" just as there are river-men, mountain-men, or sea-men—each at home in his element, and if any man knows the snow and its ways it is the trouble-hunter.

"Bill" Proctor, the emergency man of the Colorado Telephone Company, is a good example. He bears the reputation of having always got what he started after; and not only does he take the message to Garcia, but he hurries back for another.

Like most thoroughbred trouble-hunters, Bill is a great walker. On the last of a three-day trip he once made through the mountains to Denver, he covered sixty-six miles over the continental divide in twenty-two hours, and then went to a dance in the evening. He is a little man, but he has one of those jaws that is the feature of a face. The fact that he would take the stages out through the snows after other men had abandoned them was what brought him to the attention of the telephone company.

Last winter the Denver wire chief told him that two men who had tried to "shoot" some trouble from the farther end of the Steamboat toll line had given it up, and had been found snow-blind and snow-bound in a cabin, burning old bedsteads to keep warm.

"I'll get it," said Bill.

"Getting it" meant a railroad trip over the divide to the rail-head, then a morning's dickering for a team and sled. No one wanted to make a trip which they considered impossible. But Bill hired a mule from one man, a horse from another, the sled and harness from a third, and persuaded man number four to drive him through the drifts, a plunging twelve miles on his way.

With a fifty-four pound coil of wire, two skis,

a test-set, and his climbing-irons on his back, Bill pushed ahead on snow-shoes to Whideley's Peak, where he spent the night, and got a guide and trapper to accompany him. That next day's trip was made on skis—eighteen miles over the Rabbit-Ears Range to the trouble—testing back to Denver whenever the line showed above the snow; and for a half-mile at a time, twenty-one-foot poles would be entirely covered. When he had "gotten it" and found the wire clear both ways, Bill and his guide, Charley, started back.

As night came on, the cold increased and their clothing, which had got wet during the middle of the day, froze hard as armour. Eating snow dries and parches the throat, so Bill always carries a flask of water on these hikes. That night it froze solid under his coat. To climb the icy crust that formed they tied ropes around their feet and under the skis to give a purchase, and the drag of the skis drove fierce pains through their hips. Misjudging the slopes, which all seem level in the moonlight, Bill followed his partner too close, and there was a disastrous fall when they ran together at the bottom.

When they had finished the trip back to shelter, Charley's feet were found to be frozen to his socks and overshoes, in one solid mass of ice. They cut them out and teased them back to life. Charley has



stayed there ever since—a pensioner of the Company. Proctor is still broadening his experience shooting trouble—but not until two months later did the entire soles of his feet peel off.

Bill is a recognised authority on "snow-snakes, with their pink little eyes," and to the uninitiated he can unfold wonderful tales of their habits. His recipe for chilblains—"one big onion ground, eight ounces of arnica, two bits' worth of sea-salt, in boiling water, applied to the feet four nights running"—would cure anything. He is never at a loss for ways and means. He has cashed a worthless cheque for money to catch an outbound train, and then got his wire chief to make it good. When he got to the

trouble he did not have enough wire, so he beat his way on the trains to where he could get it. His ignorance of obstacles is appalling.

These are fragments of one man's experiences—and I have detailed a few of them to try and show something of the nature of a trouble-man's work. There are hundreds of other good men whose experiences and abilities are as varied, and anecdotes are endless. But an insight into some of the conditions which prevail where these men are forced to work will probably help more to depict the type which I am describing, and which I admire not a little.

At Corona on the "Moffat line" in Colorado a telegraph line crosses the continental divide, and is maintained during the winter under conditions that are astounding. Sleet-storms cover the wires with ice to a thickness of nine inches, and the weight of ice, about twenty pounds to the foot, stretches the wires until they sag to the ground and run from pole to pole at the base, then up the pole to the cross-arm. The poles themselves stick out like huge icicles, and to climb them the lineman clears a space at the bottom, raps the pole with his pick-handle, when hundreds of pounds of ice come crashing down.

The snow, at fifteen feet deep on the average, drifts into huge piles that the heat of a long summer cannot melt. On one occasion a cattle-car, which

had stalled near the divide, filled so rapidly with snow that the steers, in tramping it down, were crowded against the top of the car and in danger of suffocating. When liberated they stampeded over a precipice, and their bones lie bleaching there to-day.

The thermometer drops away down, the springs build huge ice-warts on the landscape, and the humming wires border deep and treacherous chasms. But in fierce determination to break men's hearts none of the elements compares with the wind. For a hundred miles up "Middle Park" it gathers velocity, and converges toward the saddle of the range where the wire crosses. Here it howls along, smothering the severity of the landscape in a smooth, hard blanket of white. Nothing lives under its fury. The little dwarf cedars that grow about timber-line are all bent over with the agony of it, and their limbs grow only from the leeward side of the trunks.

There is a Government observation station at the pass, and for one month it recorded an average wind velocity of thirty miles an hour, and a maximum of eighty-four miles. Such a wind, with sleet, will sandpaper paint off buildings. It will pack the snow hard enough to support an ore waggon, and flatten the lineman against the windward side of a pole, or tear him vindictively away from the other. Such a wind would drive a polar bear to cover.

Yet here the trouble-hunters fight Old Winter to a standstill, and when he goes into his worst tantrums they hit a compromise by laying the wires on the snow and trusting the frost to do the insulating. Three or four men cover this line, and their chief has a pardonable pride in the regularity with which reports come over the line. Seldom does the record appear—"Wires down, no report."

In several other places telephone lines cross the continental divide and test the fury of the winter wind. When the poles were first set on Mosquito Pass, the wind took out a mile of them the following day. The spans were shortened until only fifteen feet separated the poles, but still they went down, and now over the pass proper there is used a "submarine" cable thirteen thousand feet above the top of the sea!

Another district which makes peculiar difficulties for the trouble-hunter is what is known as the San Juan country in south-western Colorado. It is a mining district in the roughest part of the mountains, and while only eight miles separate two of the towns, they are accessible to one another only by a climb over the mountains of thousands of feet, or a railroad trip of about one hundred miles round. The ore from the mines is handled almost entirely in aerial trams, because roads are impracticable. The

towns nestle below the mountains. The mountains themselves are grim and rusty with iron ore, and the timber hangs on their sides like last year's fur on an old buffalo.

During the summer supplies are sent all over the system and every possible preparation made for the winter. As the drifts grow deep, emergency poles have to be stuffed into the snow and there made to serve, for they could never be set in the ground. Up near the tops of the peaks the men chop foot-holds in the ice-packs and work along them in the wind, tied together like Alpine guides. Here, as always in a dangerous country, trouble-men never go alone, but always in pairs, so as to be able to get help when accidents occur. That the travel is difficult may be judged from the fact that a repair party once spent eleven days covering thirty miles of the line. They spent nights under bridges or in abandoned tunnels, and lived dependent on their own cooking as they went. Snow-blindness is a constant menace, and besides blackening their faces, wearing glasses and masks, the men here use black veils. These serve also as protection to the faces, for they can be terribly burnt by the glare of the sun on the snow.

When Winter loosens his grip on the country,

the snow-slides begin. They are the rule and not the exception. The principal ones, like the "Sunnyside," are well known, and every one gives them a wide margin of room. But the most of them come from all directions and follow no rules or routes of any sort. Forty-five of them have been counted in four miles.

In March of one year twenty-eight men in all lost their lives in the slides. Miners were swept out of bed at the shaft-houses and down the mountain, over and over in the snow with flour, ginger-snaps, and mine machinery. Some finished on top unhurt, but others were dug out late in the next summer. It's a time for living things to hibernate—the miners cluster round a phonograph and forget the world for months. But it is the trouble-hunter's busy time.

The thaws are teasing loose tons of snow at the top of a great toboggan. Away up at the top where the snow-cones form, one topples over, and a few snowballs start rolling down the slope, then a huge cake drags loose and the slide is off. Quietly and stealthily it starts, gathering volume and speed each second ; the swish of the snow changes to a muffled rattle as trees and boulders are polished from the surface and ground underneath ; the snow billows up in mushrooms as it is pushed from behind, and

ahead of the avalanche rifts of snow shoot out at lightning speed. The speed and power of it are titanic, but the terror of that rumble and noise cannot compare with the awful way that huge uncanny tangle of snow and trees slugs its way to the bottom and spreads out in a remorseless solidity.

So far the linemen here have had marvellously few deaths from the slides. Besides crediting much to their proverbial luck, it implies a cool judgment and caution in the men. They are usually picked men and young, who have borne a reputation for endurance and capability in the country. They are all sworn as special deputies, go armed, and carry the authority and confidence of the community.

One thing that should be mentioned is the constant proximity of these men to instant death while they are working on wires that carry such a current as seventeen thousand volts. It is not necessary to come into contact with it—merely to get into the field will kill a man if he is grounded. When a wire goes down, the trouble can often be located by the flame of the arc which is thrown. It will jump the thirty feet from the pole to the ground, and an arc like that will light up the mountain canyons for miles around.

In summer, when thunderstorms are rife, the lightning adds its terror to the lines. The light-

ning arrestors at the sub-station flash and crackle like artillery, and now and again cross-arms are burned off or the giant insulators shattered. On the peaks among the clouds electrical storms are always terrifying. The lightning discharges in horizontal instead of perpendicular planes, and distinct electrical waves fly back and forth to oppress a man till he lies down flat and gets under them. At such times blue sparks play all over the mane of a sweaty horse, and enough static electricity is gathered on a telephone wire to light lamp globes, while sparks will jump to the lineman's spurs as he climbs a pole. Lightning is such a factor that barbed wire is often strung on the cross arms with mountain toll lines to catch and ground the bolts.

One power company carries one hundred thousand volts on each of three cables, one hundred and fifty miles over the mountains to Denver. During a storm these cables are livid lines of blue light streaking through the darkness. When one of these wires grounds, it burns the sand to glass where it enters the earth ; and they tell of its having fallen across an iron bridge near Dillon and burning it in two. So much leakage is there from this current that the trouble-hunter's telephone line, strung about fifty feet from the cable-towers, induces enough voltage to make it dangerous. A patrolman who had called

up his wife on this wire to let her know he was safe, had no more than heard her answer than there came to him a piercing scream as she was knocked senseless to the floor.

ALLEN TUPPER TRUE.

"While thou art in the world, and hast an honest employment, thou art certainly by the order of Providence obliged to labour in it, and to finish the work given thee, according to thy best ability without repining in the least ; seeking out and manifesting for God's glory the wonders of Nature and Art."

JACOB BEHMEN.

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE PRIOR

IT was no long while after this that the Prior fell into a grievous illness ; and when he knew that his hour was drawing nigh, he besought the monks to bear him up to the foot of the cross on the mound. There, as he looked far abroad into the earth over the tree-tops, he smiled with lightness of heart and said : " If the earth be so beautiful and so sweet, what must the delight of Paradise be ? "

And behold ! a small brown squirrel came down a tree, and ran across and nestled in the holy man's bosom, and its eyes were full of tears. The Prior stroked and caressed it and said, " God bless thee, little woodlander, and may the nuts never fail thee ! "

Then gazing up into the blue sky and the deep spaces of air above, he murmured in a low voice, " It is a very awful and lonely way to go ! "

" Not so awful for you," replied the companion of his youth. " That blue way has been beaten plain by the Lord Christ and the Apostles, and many holy men from the beginning."

That same night the alabaster box was broken, and the precious ointment poured out. And on the Prior's breast they placed the golden rose, and under the great red hawthorn in the midst of the cloister-garth they laid him, O Lord, beneath the earth which is Thy foot-stool.

WILLIAM CANTON.



THE STORE CUPBOARD.

From the painting by Peter de Hooch in the Ryks Museum, Amsterdam.

DON JOSÉ'S MULE, JACINTHA

IN palmy days, now long gone by, no Don in Cadiz
city

Possessed a mule like Don José's, so useful or so
pretty.

O children, listen to my tale, and give a tear of pity
To Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Once Don José had lived gaily, and then his servants
all,

From the head-cook in the kitchen to Jacintha in
her stall,

On every dainty fattened—but oh! there came a
fall

To Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Once Don José's purse was well filled, but his hand
was ever ready

To his brothers and his nephews, who were spend-
thrifths and unsteady—

“ O my master, unwise givers sure at last themselves
grow needy ! ”

Thought Don José's mule, Jacintha.

True enough, there came a morning when the
Alcayde's men were laying

Hands on all Don José's chattels, for there seemed
no way of paying
Otherwise his debts and bond-writs ; then, oh,
sorrowful the braying
 Of Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Poor Don José's house was ransacked of its treasures
old and new,
Pictures, gems, and suits of armour, gold and relics
from Peru :
Nothing spared they, even taking all the trappings
red and blue
 Of Don José's mule, Jacintha.

But Don José was hidalgo¹ of the true Quixotic
spirit—
If misfortune were upon him, far too proud was he
to fear it ;
And quite worthy such a master, for the same heroic
merit,
 Was Don José's mule, Jacintha.

With a stately contemplation glanced Don José on
his villa—
Glanced on every grove of myrtle and on every
marble pillar ;

¹ *Hidalgo*, a Spanish nobleman.

Thought of sunny olive vineyard and of luscious,
well-filled cellar—

Then of his mule, Jacintha.

Said Don José, "Not for fountains, nor for halls of
gilded stone

Was man's soul made, nor for riches, nor for meat
and drink alone,

But for grateful, true affection—and no other man
shall own

Don José's mule, Jacintha."

He continued contemplating, meantime smiling
somewhat sadly—

"Ah! 'tis well my servants left me—scanty fare
would suit *them* badly;

But there's one who bore me up-hill, and will bear
me down as gladly—

'Tis Don José's mule, Jacintha.

"She can do without her trappings; she'll not rage
because her ration

Comes at every meal-time shorter than her humblest
expectation;

Scorn she'll never dream of showing at my ruined
situation—

Will Don José's mule, Jacintha.

" She'll not tell me I was foolish—she'll not preach
her own advice ;
She'll not constantly upbraid me in a half-condoling
voice ;
But she'll serve me when I need her—and no gold
shall be the price
 Of Don José's mule, Jacintha."

Then Don José mounted gaily, though his secret
heart was swelling,
And the two together travelled to a humble little
dwelling :
Said the Don, " For consolation, give me that which
has no telling,
 Like Don José's mule, Jacintha's!"

Night and morning came Don José to Jacintha's
modest stable,
And his thin white hands would groom her with the
skill that they were able,
And the largest share of salad, from her master's
scanty table,
 Had Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Every day he took an airing, and no king could sit
more stately :

Then Jacintha's ears pricked proudly, and she moved her legs sedately;

Oh, never fallen greatness was upheld by mule so greatly

As Don José's by Jacintha.

Neither trotting, neither ambling, was her sober, saddened pace,

But a kind of martial marching, full of dignity and grace;

Every cavalcade and palfrey, every chariot gay gave place

To Don José's mule, Jacintha.

When Don José empty-handed came unto the stable door,

Far too proud for disappointment, or to show a wish for more,

Gaily to her empty hay-rack, as if she'd ample store,
Went Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Very solemn grew Jacintha, suiting thus her master's mood;

Very bare-ribbed grew Jacintha, but her head was never bowed;

"We'll die like true Castilians," was the maxim staunch and proud

Of Don José's mule, Jacintha.

True enough, there broke a morning when the thin
hand came no more,
With its scanty bunch of parsley, to Jacintha's
stable door ;
Then as one who lies down gladly when a hard day's
work is o'er,
 Lay Don José's mule, Jacintha.

Softly then, the snow-flakes hurried from the pass-
ing winter clouds,
And the master and the servant wrapped in white,
unspotted shrouds,
Till the spring-time brought the wild flowers, and
they bloom in coloured crowds,
 O'er Don José and Jacintha.

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

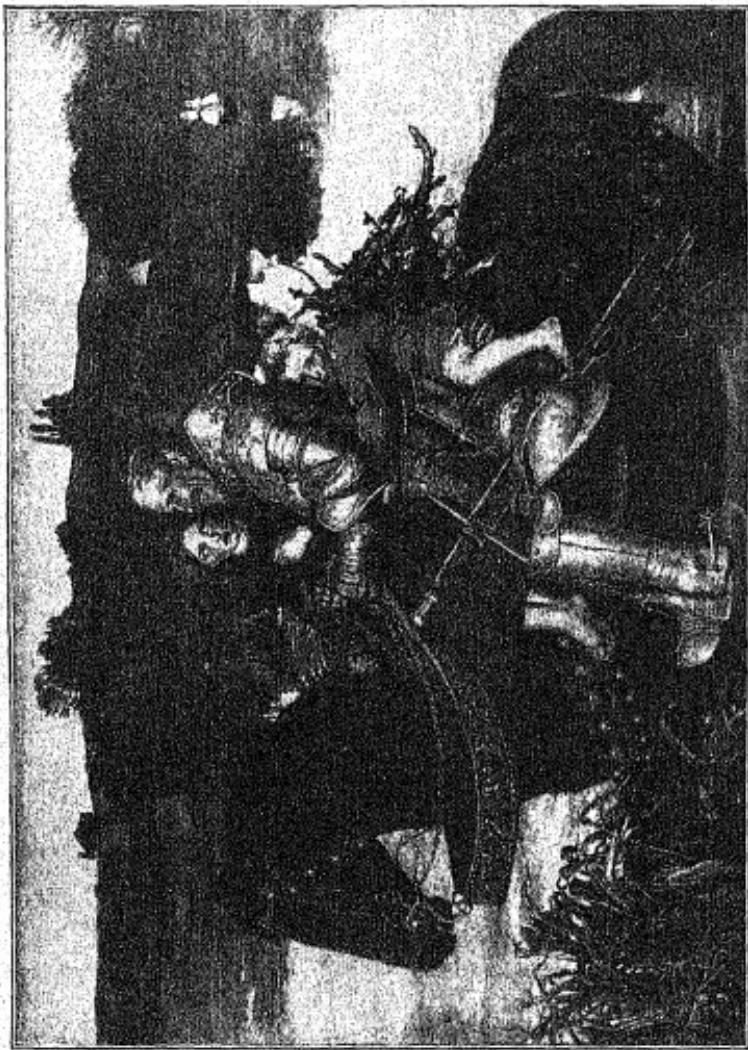
The family, like the home in which they live, needs to be kept in repair, lest some little rift in the walls should appear and let in the wind and rain. The happiness of a family depends very much on attention to little things. Order, comfort, regularity, cheerfulness, good taste, pleasant conversation—these are the ornaments of daily life, deprived of which it degenerates into wearisome routine.

BENJAMIN JOWETT.

Q

SIR ISUMBRAS AT THE FORD.

From the painting by Sir John E. Millais, P.R.A.



WINTER ANIMALS

I

WHEN the ponds were firmly frozen, they afforded not only new and shorter routes to many points, but new views from their surfaces of the familiar landscape around them. When I crossed Flint's Pond, after it was covered with snow, though I had often paddled about and skated over it, it was so unexpectedly wide and so strange that I could think of nothing but Baffin's Bay. The Lincoln hills rose up around me at the extremity of a snowy plain, in which I did not remember to have stood before ; and the fishermen, at an indeterminable distance over the ice, moving slowly about with their wolfish dogs, passed for sealers or Esquimaux, or in misty weather loomed like fabulous creatures, and I did not know whether they were giants or pygmies.

I took this course when I went to lecture in Lincoln in the evening, travelling in no road and passing no house between my own hut and the lecture-room. In Goose Pond, which lay in my way, a colony of musk-rats dwelt, and raised their cabins high above the ice, though none could be seen abroad when I crossed it. Walden, being like the rest

usually bare of snow, or with only shallow and interrupted drifts on it, was my yard, where I could walk freely when the snow was nearly two feet deep on a level elsewhere, and the villagers were confined to their streets. There, far from the village street, and, except at very long intervals, from the jingle of sleigh-bells, I slid and skated, as in a vast moose-yard well trodden, overhung by oak woods and solemn pines bent down with snow or bristling with icicles.

For sound in winter nights, and often in winter days, I heard the forlorn but melodious note of a hooting owl indefinitely far—such a sound as the frozen earth would yield if struck with a suitable plectrum—and quite familiar to me at last, though I never saw the bird while it was making it. I seldom opened my door in a winter evening without hearing it ; *Hoo-hoo-hoo, hoorer-hoo*, sounded sonorously, and the first three syllables accented somewhat like *how-der-do* ; or sometimes *hoo-hoo* only.

One night in the beginning of winter, before the pond froze over, about nine o'clock, I was startled by the loud honking of a goose, and stepping to the door heard the sound of their wings like a tempest in the woods as they flew low over my house. They passed over the pond towards Fair-Haven, seemingly deterred from settling by my light, their commodore honking all the while with a regular beat.



Photo, Frederick Hollyer.

EVENING PEACE.

From the painting by Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

Suddenly an unmistakable cat-owl from very near me, with the most harsh and tremendous voice I ever heard from any inhabitant of the woods, responded at regular intervals to the goose, as if determined to expose and disgrace this intruder from Hudson's Bay by exhibiting a greater compass and volume of voice in a native, and *boo-hoo* him out of Concord horizon. "What do you mean by alarming the citadel at this time of night consecrated to me? Do you think I am ever caught napping at such an hour, and that I have not got lungs and a larynx as well as yourself? *Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo!*" It was one of the most thrilling discords I ever heard. And yet, if you had a discriminating ear, there were in it the elements of a concord such as these plains never saw nor heard.

I also heard the whooping of the ice in the pond, my great bed-fellow in that part of Concord, as if it were restless in its bed and would fain turn over—were troubled with bad dreams; or I was waked by the crackling of the ground by the frost, as if some one had driven a team against my door, and in the morning would find a crack in the earth a quarter of a mile long and a third of an inch wide.

Sometimes I heard the foxes, as they ranged over the snow crust in moonlight nights in search of a partridge or other game, barking raggedly and de-

moniacally like forest dogs, as if labouring with some anxiety, or seeking expression, struggling for light and to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets ; for if we take the ages into our account, may there not be a civilisation going on among brutes as well as men ? They seemed to me to be rudimentary burrowing men, still standing on their defence, awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window, attracted by my light, barked a vulpine curse at me, and then retreated.

Usually the red squirrel waked me in the dawn, coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of the house, as if sent out of the woods for this purpose. In the course of the winter I threw out half a bushel of ears of sweet corn, which had not got ripe, on to the snow crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals which were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. All day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manœuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub-oaks, running over the snow crusts by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind, now a few paces this way, with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceivable haste with his "trotters," as if it were for a wager,

and now as many paces that way, but never getting on more than half a rod at a time ; and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression and a gratuitous somersault, as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed on him—for all the motions of a squirrel, even in the most solitary recesses of the forest, imply spectators as much as those of a dancing girl—wasting more time in delay and circumspection than would have sufficed to walk the whole distance—I never saw one walk—then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson, he would be in the top of a young pitch-pine, winding up his clock and chiding all imaginary spectators, soliloquising and talking to all the universe at the same time—for no reason that I could ever detect, or he himself was aware of, I suspect.

At length he would reach the corn, and selecting a suitable ear, brisk about in an uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick of my wood-pile before my window, where he looked me in the face, and there sat for hours, supplying himself with a new ear from time to time, nibbling at first voraciously and throwing the half-naked cobs about; till at length he grew more dainty still and played with his food, tasting only the inside of the kernel, while the ear, which was held balanced over the stick by one paw, slipped from his careless grasp and

fell to the ground, when he would look over at it with a ludicrous expression of uncertainty, as if suspecting that it had life, with a mind not made up whether to get it again, or a new one, or be off ; now thinking of corn, then listening to hear what was in the wind.

So the little impudent fellow would waste many an ear in a forenoon ; till at last, seizing some longer and plumper one, considerably bigger than himself, and skilfully balancing it, he would set out with it to the woods, like a tiger with a buffalo, by the same zig-zag course and frequent pauses, scratching along with it as if it were too heavy for him and falling all the while, making its fall a diagonal between a perpendicular and horizontal, being determined to put it through at any rate ;—a singularly frivolous and whimsical fellow ;—and so he would get off with it to where he lived, perhaps carry it to the top of a pine tree forty or fifty rods distant, and I would afterwards find cobs strewn about the woods in various directions.

II

At length the jays arrive, whose discordant screams were heard long before, as they were warily making their approach an eighth of a mile off, and in a stealthy and sneaking manner they flit from tree

to tree, nearer and nearer, and pick up the kernels which the squirrels have dropped. Then, sitting on a pitch-pine bough, they attempt to swallow in their haste a kernel which is too big for their throats and chokes them ; and after great labour they disgorge it, and spend an hour in the endeavour to crack it by repeated blows with their bills. They were manifestly thieves, and I had not much respect for them ; but the squirrels, though at first shy, went to work as if they were taking what was their own.

Meanwhile also came the chickadees in flocks, which, picking up the crumbs the squirrels had dropped, flew to the nearest twig and, placing them under their claws, hammered away at them with their little bills as they would an insect in the bark, till they were sufficiently reduced for their slender throats. A little flock of these tit-mice came daily to pick a dinner out of my wood-pile, or the crumbs at my door, with faint, flitting, lisping notes, like the tinkling of icicles in the grass, or else with sprightly *day, day, day*, or more rarely, in spring-like days, a wiry summery *phe-be* from the woodside. They were so familiar that at length one alighted on an armful of wood which I was carrying in, and pecked at the sticks without fear. I once had a sparrow alight on my shoulder for a moment while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I

was more distinguished by that circumstance than I should have been by any epaulette I could have worn. The squirrels also grew at last to be quite familiar, and occasionally stepped upon my shoe, when that was the nearest way.

III

When the ground was not yet quite covered, and again near the end of winter, when the snow was melted on my south hillside and about my wood-pile, the partridges came out of the woods morning and evening to feed there. Whichever side you walk in the woods the partridges burst away on whirring wings, jarring the snow from the dry leaves and twigs on high, which comes sifting down in the sunbeams like golden dust, for this brave bird is not to be scared by winter. It is frequently covered up by drifts, and, it is said, "sometimes plunges from on wing into the soft snow, where it remains concealed for a day or two." I used to start them in the open land also, where they had come out of the woods at sunset to "bud" the wild apple trees. They will come regularly every evening to particular trees, where the cunning sportsman lies in wait for them, and the distant orchards next the woods suffer thus not a little. I am glad that the partridge gets fed,

at any rate. It is Nature's own bird, which lives on buds and diet-drink.

In dark winter mornings, or in short winter afternoons, I sometimes heard a pack of hounds threading all the woods with hounding cry and yelp, unable to resist the instinct of the chase, and the note of the hunting horn at intervals, proving that man was in the rear. The woods ring again, and yet no fox bursts forth on to the open level of the pond, nor following pack pursuing their Actæon. And perhaps at evening I see the hunters returning with a single brush trailing from their sleigh for a trophy, seeking their inn. They tell me that if the fox would remain in the bosom of the frozen earth he would be safe, or if he would run in a straight line away no fox-hound could overtake him; but, having left his pursuers far behind, he stops to rest and listen till they come up, and when he runs he circles round to his old haunts, where the hunters await him. Sometimes, however, he will run upon a wall many rods, and then leap off far to one side, and he appears to know that water will not retain his scent.

A hunter told me that he once saw a fox pursued by hounds burst out on to Walden when the ice was covered with shallow puddles, run part of the way across, and then return to the same shore. Ere long

the hounds arrived, but here they lost the scent. Sometimes a pack hunting by themselves would pass my door, and circle round my house, and yelp and bound without regarding me, as if afflicted by a species of madness, so that nothing could divert them from the pursuit. Thus they circle until they fall upon the recent trail of a fox, for a wise hound will forsake everything else for this.

One day a man came to my hut from Lexington to inquire after his hound that made a large track, and had been hunting for a week by himself. But I fear that he was not the wiser for all I told him, for every time I attempted to answer his question he interrupted me by asking, "What do you do here?" He had lost a dog, but found a man.

One old hunter, who used to come to bathe in Walden once every year when the water was warmest, and at such times looked in upon me, told me that many years ago he took his gun one afternoon and went out for a cruise in Walden Wood, and as he walked the Wayland road he heard the cry of hounds approaching, and ere long a fox leaped the wall into the road, and as quick as thought leaped the other wall out of the road, and his swift bullet had not touched him. Some way behind came an old hound and her three pups in full pursuit, hunting on their own account, and disappeared again in the woods.

Late in the afternoon, as he was resting in the thick woods south of Walden, he heard the voice of the hounds far over towards Fair-Haven still pursuing the fox; and on they came, their hounding cry, which made all the woods ring, sounding nearer and nearer.

For a long time he stood still and listened to their music, so sweet to a hunter's ear, when suddenly the fox appeared, threading the solemn aisles with an easy coursing pace, whose sound was concealed by a sympathetic rustle of the leaves, swift and still, keeping the ground, leaving his pursuers far behind; and leaping upon a rock amid the woods, he sat erect and listening, with his back to the hunter. For a moment compassion restrained the latter's arm, but that was a short-lived mood, and as quick as thought can follow thought his piece was levelled, and *whang!*—the fox rolling over the rock lay dead on the ground. The hunter still kept his place and listened to the hounds. Still on they came, and now the near woods resounded through all their aisles with their demoniac cry.

At length the old hound burst into view with muzzle to the ground, and snapping the air as if possessed, and ran directly to the rock; but spying the dead fox she suddenly ceased her hounding, as if struck dumb with amazement, and walked round

and round him in silence ; and one by one her pups arrived, and, like their mother, were sobered into silence by the mystery. Then the hunter came forward and stood in their midst, and the mystery was solved. They waited in silence while he skinned the fox, then followed the brush awhile, and at length turned off into the woods again. That evening a Weston Squire came to the Concord hunter's cottage to inquire for his hounds, and told how for a week they had been hunting on their own account from Weston woods. The Concord hunter told him what he knew and offered him the skin, but the other declined it and departed. He did not find his hounds that night, but the next day learned that they had crossed the river and put up at a farm house for the night, whence, having been well fed, they took their departure early in the morning.

At midnight, when there was a moon, I sometimes met with hounds in my path prowling about the woods, which would skulk out of my way as if afraid, and stand silent amid the bushes till I had passed.

IV

Squirrels and wild mice disputed for my store of nuts. There were scores of pitch-pines around my house, from one to four inches in diameter, which had

been gnawed by mice the previous winter—a Norwegian winter for them, for the snow lay long and deep, and they were obliged to mix a large proportion of pine bark with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at midsummer, and many of them had grown a foot, though completely girdled, but after another winter such were without exception dead. It is remarkable that a single mouse should thus be allowed a whole pine tree for its dinner, gnawing round instead of up and down it ; but perhaps it is necessary in order to thin these trees, which are wont to grow up densely.

The hares were very familiar. One hid her form under my house all winter, separated from me only by the flooring, and she startled me each morning by her hasty departure when I began to stir—thump, thump, thump, striking her head against the floor timbers in her hurry. They used to come round my door at dusk to nibble the potato parings wh~~ind~~ had thrown out, and were so nearly the color of the ground that they could hardly be distinguished when still.

Sometimes in the twilight I alternately lost with recovered sight of one sitting motionless under my window. When I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce. Neat hand they only excited my pity. One evenir

one sat by my door two paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move ; a poor wee thing, lean and bony, with ragged ears and sharp nose, scant tail and slender paws. It looked as if Nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but stood on her last toes. Its large eyes appeared young and unhealthy, almost dropsical. I took a step, and lo, away it scud with an elastic spring over the snow crust, straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—the wild free venison, asserting its vigour and the dignity of Nature. Not without reason was its slenderness. Such then was its nature.

What is a country without rabbits and partridges ? They are among the most simple and indigenous animal products, ancient and venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times, of the very hue and substance of Nature, nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and to one another ; it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away, only a natural one, as much to be expected as rustling leaves. The partridge and the rabbit are still sure to thrive, like true natives of the soil, whatever revolutions occur. If the forest is cut off, the sprouts and bushes which

spring up afford them concealment, and they become more numerous than ever. That must be a poor country indeed that does not support a hare. Our woods teem with them both, and around every swamp may be seen the partridge or rabbit walk, beset with twiggy fences and horse-hair snares, which some cow-boy tends.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU.

(This writer has more to say about the animals in his book entitled "Walden, or Life in the Woods.")

TALES FROM OLD JAPAN

I. THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW

ONCE upon a time there lived an old man and an old woman. The old man, who had a kind heart, kept a young sparrow, which he tenderly nurtured. But the dame was a cross-grained old thing, and one day when the sparrow had pecked at some paste with which she was going to starch her linen, she flew into a great rage, and cut the sparrow's tongue and let it loose.

When the old man came home from the hills and

found that the bird had flown, he asked what had become of it, so the old woman answered that she had cut its tongue and let it go, because it had stolen her starching-paste. Now the old man, hearing this cruel tale, was sorely grieved, and thought to himself, "Alas! where can my bird be gone? Poor thing! Poor little tongue-cut sparrow! where is your home now?" and he wandered far and wide seeking for his pet, and crying, "Mr. Sparrow! Mr. Sparrow! where are you living?"

One day at the foot of a certain mountain the old man fell in with the lost bird, and when they had congratulated one another on their mutual safety, the sparrow led the old man to his home, and, having introduced him to his wife and chicks, set before him all sort of dainties, and entertained him hospitably.

"Please partake of our humble fare," said the sparrow; "poor as it is, you are very welcome."

"What a polite sparrow!" answered the old man, who remained for a long time as the sparrow's guest, and was daily feasted right royally. At last the old man said that he must take his leave and return home, and the bird offering him two wicker baskets, begged him to carry them with him as a parting present. One of the baskets was heavy and the other was light, so the old man, saying that as he

was feeble and stricken in years he would only accept the light one, shouldered it, and trudged off home, leaving the sparrow-family disconsolate at parting from him.

When the old man got home the dame grew very angry, and began to scold him, saying, "Well, and pray where have you been this many a day? A pretty thing, indeed, to be gadding about at your time of life!"

"Oh!" replied he, "I have been on a visit to the sparrows, and when I came away they gave me this wicker basket as a parting gift." Then they opened the basket to see what was inside, and, lo and behold! it was full of gold and silver and precious things. When the old woman, who was as greedy as she was cross, saw all the riches displayed before her, she changed her scolding strain, and could not contain herself for joy.

"I'll go and call upon the sparrows, too," said she, "and get a pretty present." So she asked the old man the way to the sparrows' house, and set forth on her journey. Following his directions, she at last met the tongue-cut sparrow, and exclaimed:

"Well met! well met! Mr. Sparrow. I have been looking forward to the pleasure of seeing you." So she tried to flatter and cajole the sparrow by soft speeches.



The bird could not but invite the dame to its home, but it took no pains to feast her, and said nothing about a parting gift. She, however, was not to be put off, so she asked for something to carry away with her in remembrance of her visit. The

sparrow accordingly produced two baskets as before, and the greedy old woman choosing the heavier of the two carried it off with her. But when she opened the basket to see what was inside, all sorts of hobgoblins and elves sprang out of it and began to torment her.

But the old man adopted a son, and his family grew rich and prosperous. What a happy old man !

II. THE STORY OF THE OLD MAN WHO MADE WITHERED TREES TO BLOSSOM

IN the old, old days there lived an honest man with his wife, who had a favourite dog, which they used to feed with fish and tit-bits from their own kitchen. One day as the old folks went out to work in their garden the dog went with them, and began playing about. All of a sudden the dog stopped short and began to bark, " Bow, wow, wow ! " wagging his tail violently.

The old people thought that there must be something nice to eat under the ground, so they brought a spade and began digging, when, lo and behold ! the place was full of gold pieces and silver, and all sorts of precious things, which had been buried there. So they gathered the treasure together, and, after giving alms to the poor, bought themselves

rice-fields and corn-fields, and became wealthy people.

Now, in the next house there dwelt a covetous and stingy old man and woman, who when they heard what had happened came and borrowed the dog, and having taken him home prepared a great feast for him, and said :

" If you please, Mr. Dog, we should be much obliged to you if you would show us a place with plenty of money in it."

The dog, however, who up to that time had received nothing but cuffs and kicks from his hosts, would not eat any of the dainties which they set before him ; so the old people began to get cross, and putting a rope round the dog's neck led him out into the garden. But it was all in vain ; let them lead him where they might, not a sound would the dog utter : he had no " bow-wow " for them. At last, however, the dog stopped at a certain spot, and began to sniff, so, thinking that this must surely be the lucky place, they dug, and found nothing but a quantity of dirt. Furious at being disappointed, the wicked old couple seized the dog and killed him.

When the good old man saw that the dog whom he had lent did not come home, he went next door to ask what had become of him, and the wicked old

man answered that he had killed the dog, and buried him at the root of a pine-tree ; so the good old fellow, with a heavy heart, went to the spot, and having set out a tray with delicate food, burnt incense, and adorned the grave with flowers, as he shed tears over his lost pet.

But there was more good luck in store yet for the old people—the reward of their honesty and virtue. How do you think that happened, my children ? It is very wrong to be cruel to dogs and cats.

That night when the good old man was fast asleep in bed the dog appeared to him, and, after thanking him for all his kindness, said :

“ Cause the pine-tree under which I am buried to be cut down and made into a mortar, and use it, thinking of it as if it were myself.”

The old man did as the dog had told him to do, and made a mortar out of the wood of the pine-tree ; but when he ground his rice in it each grain of rice was turned into some rich treasure. When the wicked old couple saw this they came to borrow the mortar, but no sooner did they try to use it than all their rice was turned into filth, so in a fit of rage they broke up the mortar and burnt it. But the good old man, little suspecting that his precious mortar had been broken and burnt, wondered why his neighbours did not bring it back.

One night the dog appeared to him again in a dream, and told him what had happened, adding that if he would take the ashes of the burnt mortar and sprinkle them on withered trees, the trees would revive, and suddenly put out flowers. After saying this the dog vanished, and the old man, who heard for the first time of the loss of his mortar, ran off weeping to the neighbours' house, and begged them, at any rate, to give him back the ashes of his treasure.

Having obtained these he returned home, and made a trial of their virtues upon a withered cherry tree, which upon being touched by the ashes immediately began to sprout and blossom. When he saw this wonderful effect he put the ashes into a basket, and went about the country announcing himself as an old man who had the power of bringing dead trees to life again.

A certain prince hearing of this, and thinking it a mighty strange thing, sent for the old fellow, who showed his power by causing all the withered plum and cherry trees to shoot out and put forth flowers. So the prince gave him a rich reward of pieces of silk and cloth and other presents, and sent him home rejoicing.

So soon as the neighbours heard of this they collected all the ashes that remained, and, having put them in a basket, the wicked old man went out

into the castle town and gave out that he was the old man who had the power of reviving dead trees, and causing them to flower.

He had not to wait long before he was called into the prince's palace, and ordered to exhibit his power. But when he climbed up into a withered tree and began to scatter the ashes not a bud nor a flower appeared ; but the ashes all flew into the prince's eyes and mouth, blinding and choking him. When the prince's retainers saw this they seized the old man, and beat him almost to death, so that he crawled off home in a very sorry plight. When he and his wife found out what a trap they had fallen into, they stormed and scolded, and put themselves into a passion ; but they did no good at all.

The good old man and woman, so soon as they heard of their neighbours' distress, sent for them, and, after reproving them for their greed and cruelty, gave them a share of their own riches, which, by repeated strokes of luck, had now increased to a goodly sum. So the wicked old people mended their ways, and led good and virtuous lives ever after.

Translated by LORD REDESDALE.



THE VILLAGE DAMSEL

FOR a time holidays are over. Until the festival of the Madonna is due, after the dog days, there is no rigorous necessity for laziness. San Giovanni is past, and the most particular feasts of the early summer. Work is again the order of the day, with only the less important interval of Sunday to make a little breathing space—breathing space that will scarcely seem necessary from such pleasurable labour, perhaps, for all the peasants of the Northern Apennines think it indispensable, even though they cannot be so fitly accused as the Southern Italians of that love

of the *dolce far niente* which has come to be considered, sometimes most unjustly, such a good description of their existence.

To-day is a *giorno feriale*, a working-day proper : let us judge for ourselves of the aptness of the proverbial reproof.

Standing on the church steps, as we stood on the day of the Corpus Domini, with the peasants—men and women—gathered in knots on the piazza, and the priest in their midst, you might see straight before you a road running right away amongst the meadows to the river's bank, while to left of you another way winds itself above the water ; and behind, a third, more rugged than ever, climbs the mountain's side to a hamlet on the mountain's brow. Take either of those three paths, and you cannot miss coming shortly into the midst of some steady labour.

Down towards the river's shingle girls are driving cows to their evening drink, women are spreading yellow linen to bleach in the sunshine and moistening it with water that they dash up from the stream with their wooden scoops, or perhaps rolling it into bales before carrying it home. Below them the torrent's bed widens out in the broader expanse of the valley, with plantations of willow trees guarding its way on the stones, and coronella shrubs bending over from the rocks ; above them the water's line

dwindles away to a mere thread as it nears the mountains where it has had its birth. With the heavy homespun in coils on their heads and shoulders, or neatly folded away in baskets which they swing between them, the *contadine* climb up to the meadow's level, and so home to thatched cottages where walnuts grow in the fields, to lonelier cottages that stand in strong breezes on the ridge of the hillside : home to fractious children, famished husbands, sons and brothers—the linen, the dinner, and the supper, have been their day's work.

And on the broader way that leads to a larger neighbouring village, there have been also wayfarers. The little town that lies some three miles off down the river's course holds a few things which cannot be procured in the village. It boasts a fair now and then, whence the head of a household brings back a calf or a heifer perhaps, and even on common days the town has a few shops that can produce articles of homely furniture, or even of bright peasant dress.

Nettina has been there this very afternoon. She is coming home as cooler shadows lengthen over the meadows and furrow the hills : she has a new wooden *conca* on her head—the old timeworn copper one has been soldered so often, and yet always wears through and lets the water leak ! In her hand she carries shoes which clash against a red earthen pot that is

one of her purchases, and her large, shapely feet rise up and down off the sharp stones as fearlessly as though her way were across the cool turf of the meadow. Nettina is considered a handsome girl. She has keen dark eyes, a well-cut face, a brown skin, and black glossy hair that ripples gladly down beside her face and behind her ears, its plaits fitting round tightly into the head's hollow above the nape of the neck ; her teeth stand in beautifully even rows, large and white, and ready to be shown upon the slightest provocation to a smile. She walks well : though she must have been walking all day, she walks well, and is not tired. Her head is erect—the wooden bowl, poised on the cushion of her own knotted kerchief, only sways with the motion of her own gait. Her square shoulders scarcely give at all to the swing of her quick step, but the limbs move freely, and the body sways easily on the hips, upon one of which she holds a hand, as though to steady her step.

The last corner of the road has been doubled, and the well-known church spire with its blue painted belfry is in sight. Here the path from *La Madonna della Vittoria* strikes the main road. A man descends it now. He should be a young man from the strength and speed of his step, but his face, and even the top part of his figure, is not visible, while his

gait is of necessity stooping, for on his shoulders he bears an enormous load of hay packed into an enormous wicker pannier of coarsest network, through the holes of which long grasses press out to hang in a fringe around him. Nettina, however, seems to



know, in spite of travesty, whether he be a young man or not.

"A happy night to you, Beppino," she calls out, but without stopping her way.

"And is it you, Nettina, of the walnut-grove? What, again to Ponte Novo? How many days in the week do you go to Ponte Novo?"

"You're an ill-educated man to speak so! But I pay no heed to you. Why should I wish, suppose

you, to go to Ponte Novo ? But a woman has duties which you men only remember when she forgets them ! ”

“ You say well—you say well ! All the same the miller’s son who lives at Ponte Novo is better than the poor fellows who grow the *gran turco* up in the valley ! Eh, I should like to see what you look like now ? ”

“ But you can’t ! And it’s like your impudence to think I should look anything for you to see ! So I will give you the holy night.”

And with this greeting Nettina hurries on. She has the water to fetch, and the supper to see to. She has no time for further parley. Only, as she walks, her white teeth are the better to be seen, as she thinks over the little conversation.

The sun has set. The sky is deeper and further than ever, for it is more transparent now that there is only a remembrance of the rosy glow. The solid hills meet the air that seems almost solid, too, so far away ; their outlines lie peacefully upon the sky, soft browns and greens of pastures contrasting with the harsher character of rocks, and again with the softest quality of clouds. Just opposite, Monte Pilato breaks from out the quiet line of the horizon to strike up a great mass into the air, and at the foot of the valley Monte Cranio makes a mitre with its

two sharp peaks, in whose clefts one can see the chestnut trees' outline even from this distance.

The woods cluster so richly over the country that there scarcely seems room for the waving wheat to grow, for the large-leaved maize, nor the tall grass of the meadows. Below the road, some hundred feet, the river is creeping lazily, but now the rush of water over the weir warns Nettina that she is close at home, and must leave the river's bank and climb a steep bit of path to reach her cottage on the hill's ridge. Yet her figure scarcely stoops, nor her pace slackens, though the way is hard. To her right a little gorge cleaves the land, in which gurgles a half-parched rill, and Nettina's lungs have strength, even as she climbs, for a merry shout to the labourer who works on the opposite side.

Now she has gained the more level road above. On her right hand, thick chestnut woods clothe a hillside that slopes up toward the horizon; but on her left, fields, and vineyards, and meadows lie in fertile terraces one below the other, until they reach the valley's depth where the stream, shallow sometimes and calm, then tossed and wayward, flows onward to the larger river. Chestnut woods again are upon the further slope. They grow and flourish everywhere—tall and sweeping where the ground is richest, but finding room even upon those narrowest

ledges of earth for which the rock makes a little place. The woods are not very dense, nor the trees noble and stately, as in English parks and forests, but the trunks are old, and hollow sometimes, or gnarled again and sinuous and sweetly scented ; the branches are curved, and graceful with a strange and pertinacious grace ; large and full-veined leaves fan kindly in the breeze. Who would seek fairer and pleasanter woods wherein to pass summer days ?

Now thatched and sloping roofs and whitewashed walls of cottages peep out from between the trees, and the damsel knows that she will soon be home. For there is the village which lies opposite to her own across the gorge, and little lights are already beginning to flicker from its open doors and windows. Not lamp-lights, or even rushlights ; in the July days, at least, no light is needed after daylight is gone but the light of dying embers or of newly kindled sticks upon the hearth. These that she sees are the flames of the wood fires just lit for supper. And Nettina hastens forward with quicker step. There is a cool wind creeping softly about, and even the noise of the rushing water below seems to freshen the air. She has entered the hamlet. Walking upon the soft dead leaves which have been strewn over the stony way, and running up the few broken steps



THE VILLAGE GOSPIES.

SWAN &

beneath the little *pergola*, she turns in at the cottage door.

The mother is on her knees, blowing from her sound lungs upon the struggling fire, whence the white wood smoke ascends freely. The kitchen is an odd and dingy little place, with its solitary window and blackened ceiling, where slender rafters are set widely apart, that the chestnuts, strewn over the floor above, may be dried during winter by the heat from beneath. There is no glass, moreover, to the window, but only heavy little wooden shutters; but these are not often closed, and the free air blows in by night and by day, bearing the sweet scent of carnations that stand in a broken pot on the sill. There is no door leading into the sleeping-room—only an aperture in the wall. The pot hangs over the fire by means of a heavy chain from the centre beam. For the hearth is in the middle of the room in these Italian cottages, raised a few inches above the rest of the floor.

Rough benches stand around it, and these, with a table and a dresser at the further end, where paste is rolled out for the *maccaroni*, are all of dark walnut wood. The room is the dwelling-room as well as the kitchen—this do many little signs of rough comfort and homeliness abundantly testify. Red earthenware platters are ranged on a shelf, and several

curious water-vessels, of earthenware or metal, stand about, giving colour and quaintness to the room. On a low wooden stool without the doorstep sits a little maiden of some eight or ten years, dark and richly brown, like the greater part of Italian children ; she shells beans into a platter of quaint yellow ware, and beside her, upon the low wall of the little terrace, sits another child—older by a year or two, who carries a tiny, swaddled mummy in her arms. She is no doubt the daughter of some neighbour, and is sitting here with her little charge, that she may, at least, not be scolded by the mother and worried by more babies at home.

"Hie thee to the well, Nettina," says the elder woman, almost without looking up from her task, as she sees her daughter stand within the kitchen. "Thou hast been long at the fair. But patience ! I will kindle these two sticks while thou art gone, and then we put on the *polenta*. Haste thee."

The girl has already twisted her kerchief into a firm little cushion upon which to rest the water-vessel on her head. Then she takes the great copper *conca* and sallies forth.

The village fountain lies hard by, and at this evening hour it is thronged with women, young and old, in quest of their nightly supply. A great chattering may be heard ; the well is a trysting-place for

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young men and maidens, and a place of gossip for the old women : it is noisy. Nettina has ever been a favourite ; proud though she be, she is fond and gentle, so that, peasant girl as she is, she has more tact and courtesy than many a high-bred lady. The girls welcome her loudly, and would fain detain her awhile for the usual exchange of confidences, but she is firm to-night in her resolve not to loiter, and only laughs at the importunate questions of companions, all eager to know if that rumour be true about the new gallant. The *conca* is filled in a few minutes, and then lifted to its place on her head ; lifted, not painfully nor clumsily, but with a movement full of that grace for which these strong and hardy girls are so specially remarkable. Watch her now as she descends the steep and stony path upon the village. Her figure—strong and beautifully measured—sways gently upon its hips, her knees are straightened slightly, and her toes are pointed that she may the better feel her way as she comes down the hill. The way is rough, and the stones roll from under her, neither dare she look to her steps by reason of the burthen on her head ; yet her bare feet tread none the less firmly, nor fear to cling to the rocks. The brown column of her throat grows erect to support a shapely head from out curved and goodly shoulders, and beneath she wears a soft

silken kerchief loosely across the top part of her figure. One arm rests curved on her hip, as though to steady her gait. The other arm hangs at her side, and seems to emphasise the graceful motion of her limbs.

The *polenta* is boiling in the great pot, the beans are shelled, and the neighbour's baby has been carried away to be unswathed and swathed again, when Tonietta, playing now in the road, shrieks out in her piping treble to say that the *signori* of the *villa* are about to come by on their evening walk. Nettina steps out upon the terrace, the wooden staff in her hand with which she has been stirring the pot, and even the mother is no less curious to have a peep at the blue muslin dresses, and starched frills, and elaborate-dressed hair of the gentry. They pick their way over the dirty ground with dainty shoes, no wise fitted for mountain wear. The ladies belong to a fine family of *negozianti*, who have rented the doctor's house in the larger village. They are grand now, and glad to be stared at, for it is the eve of a great *festa*, otherwise might they be seen in the mornings, around their lodging, in attire far more slatternly than Nettina's at the present moment.

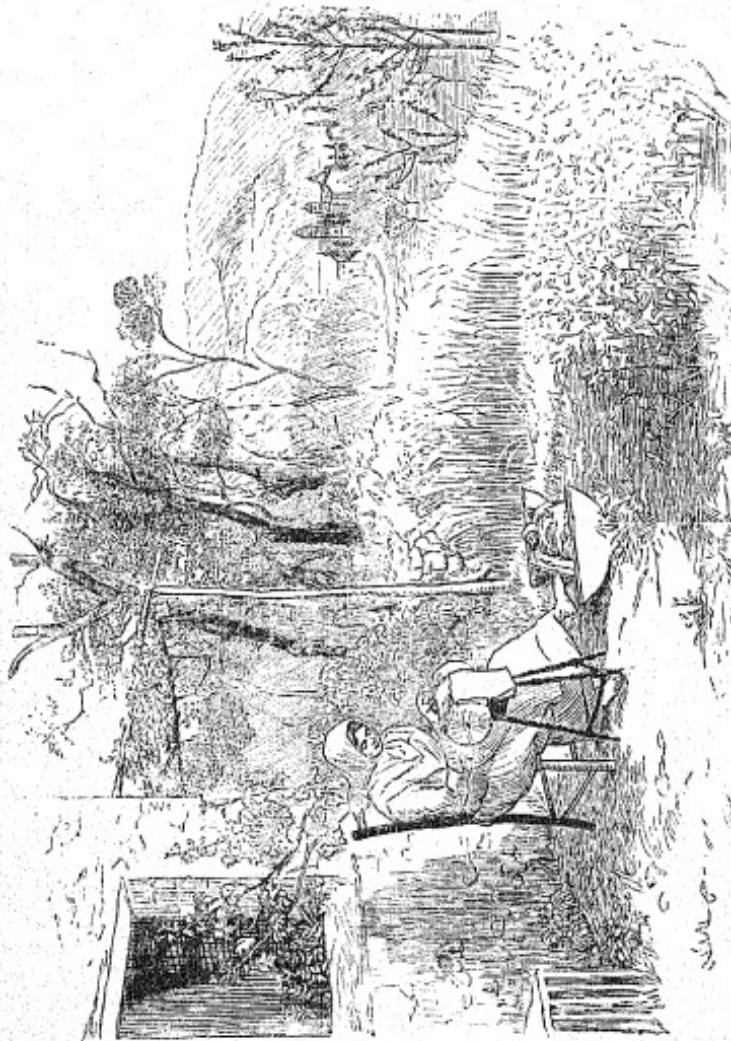
"*Orsū,*" whispers the elder woman loudly to her daughter, "haste thee, and dish up the *polenta*. The *signori* will eat with us to-night, who knows?"

But ere the meal is served and ready, the fine ladies have gone their way, mobbed and gazed at by many children, commented upon by many voices of the more learned ones.

Further down the village, families are already at supper, eating their *minestra* from off wooden platters, while they lounge in the cool upon steps and balconies of rough stone.

"A happy evening, pretty ladies! Come and eat a mouthful with us." Such are the courteous invitations poured out from all sides upon the passers-by. Hospitable-natured, for all their rough simplicity and their poverty, these good peasants are gracious and gentle-mannered, with never a thought of false shame. What they offer is of their best, and the gift needs no apology. Frank and primitive people, with winning and cheery ways, are these. Often have I rested with them beneath vine-trellised *pergole*, eating of their savoury food, or have sat upon a wooden bench, when youths and maidens gathered round the hearth on autumn evenings to toss and roast the chestnuts, and always have I been cared for as an honoured guest, while yet the merriment and the plain-speaking went on alike, nor did irksomeness creep in amongst them because of the presence of one guest who was not of their own caste.

But the twilight is fast deepening into night.



THE LACE WEAVER.

The *signore* have doffed their holiday clothes, doubtless, and are eating their supper by this time. Within the cottage there is scarce time to display the goods bought at the fair, scarce a moment wherein to question and marvel at the *centesimi* which were deducted from each bargain, before the men are all there, clamouring for the supper that is so late tonight, and laughing at the yellow kerchiefs and tapes and buttons displayed to view on the kitchen dresser. All the purchases are quickly cleared away for very shame ! Nettina lifts the flat baskets within doors, in which maize has been drying all day in the sun, and gathers up the golden cones that were hanging on cords along the cottage's front ; that other gold of the gourd-flowers, where they trail on the ground, changed to green an hour ago, when they shut their petals with the sunset.

Men and women close round the hearth, for supper is ready at last. "The *minestra* is good to-night," some one remarks ; "the *fagioli* are boiled to a savoury pulp, the *tagliarini* are finely cut." Darkness has fallen ; nine o'clock strikes. "Good night, neighbours ; I am weary," says Nettina. "Good night."

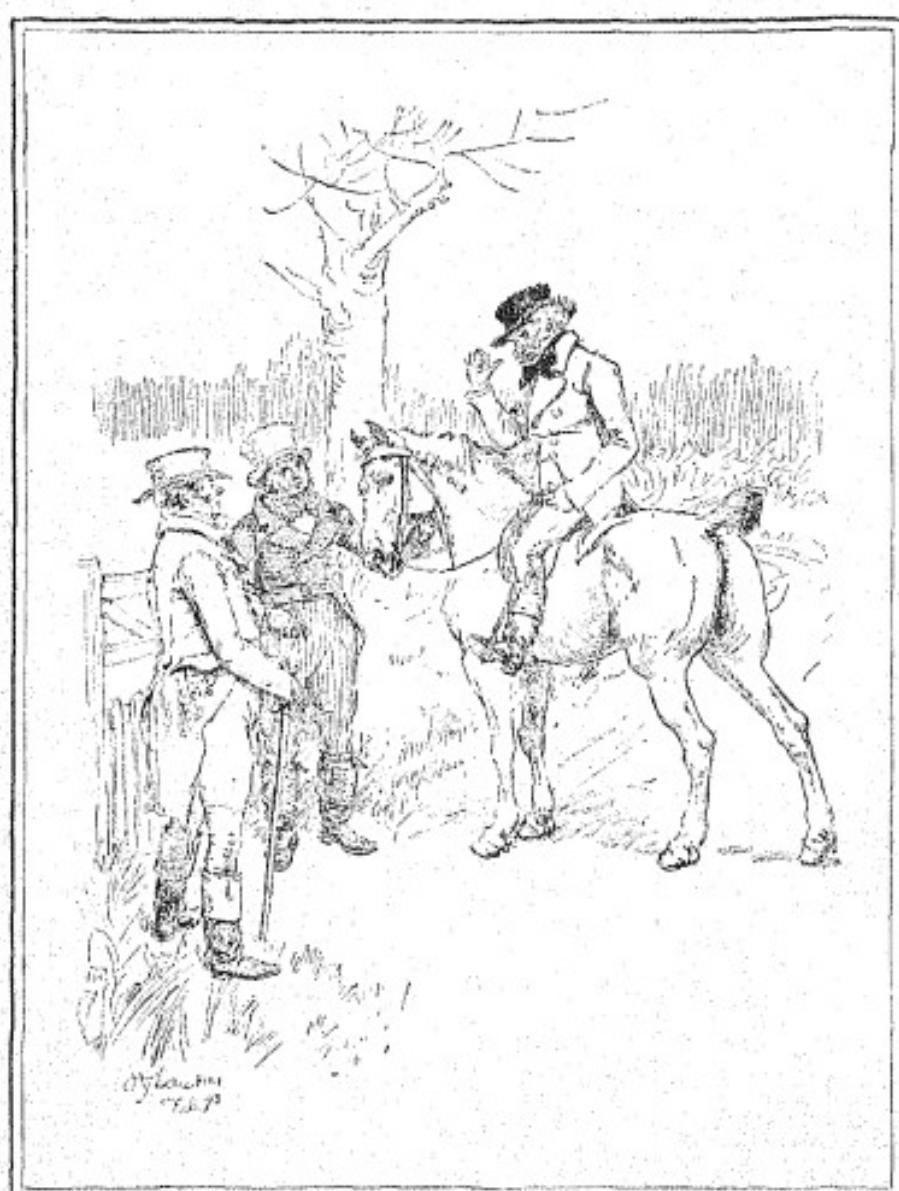
MRS. COMYNS CARR.

LITTLE COW HAY

Stephen Culpepper
Of Little Cow Hay
Farmed four-hundred acres—
As Audit book say ;
An' he rode on a flea-bitten
Fiddle-faced grey.

There's the house—in the hollow,
With gable an' eave,
But they've altered it so
That you wouldn't believe ;—
Wouldn't know the old place
If he saw it—old Steve ;

His dads an' his gran' dads
Had lived there before ;—
Born, married an' died there—
At least half a score ;
Big men the Culpeppers—
As high as the door !





His wife was a Makepeace—
An' none likelier
For she'd five hundred pounds
When he married o' her ;
An' a grey eye as kindly
As grey lavender ;

He'd sweetest o' roses,
He'd soundest o' wheat ;
Six sons—an' a daughter
To make 'em complete,
An' he always said Grace
When they sat down to meat !





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He'd the Blessin' o' Heaven
 On barnyard an' byre,
 For he made the best prices
 Of all in the shire ;
 An' he always shook hands
 With the Parson an' Squire.

But that must be nigh
 Sixty seasons away,
 When things was all diff'rent
 D'yee see—an' to-day
 There ain't no Culpeppers
 At Little Cow Hay.

P. R. CHALMERS.

(From *Punch*, by kind permission.)

BEING NEIGHBOURLY

"WHAT in the world are you going to do now, Jo ?" asked Meg, one snowy afternoon, as her sister came clumping through the hall, in rubber boots, old sack and hood, with a broom in one hand and a shovel in the other.

"Going out for exercise," answered Jo, with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes.

"I should think two long walks this morning would have been enough. It's cold and dull out, and I advise you to stay, warm and dry, by the fire, as I do," said Meg, with a shiver.

"Never take advice ; can't keep still all day ; and not being a pussy cat, I don't like to doze by the fire. I like adventures, and I'm going to find some."

Meg went back to toast her feet and read *Ivanhoe*, and Jo began to dig paths with great energy. The snow was light, and with her broom she soon swept a path all round the garden for Beth to walk in when the sun came out ; and the invalid dolls needed air. Now the garden separated the Marches' house from that of old Mr. Laurence ; both stood in a suburb of the city, which was still country-like, with groves and lawns, large gardens, and quiet streets.

A low hedge parted the two estates. On one side was an old brown house, looking rather bare and shabby, robbed of the vines that in summer covered its walls, and the flowers which then surrounded it. On the other side was a stately stone mansion, plainly betokening every sort of comfort and luxury, from the big coach-house and well-kept grounds to the conservatory, and the glimpses of lovely things one caught between the rich curtains. Yet it seemed a lonely, lifeless sort of house ; for no children frolicked on the lawn, no motherly face ever smiled at the

windows, and few people went in and out, except the old gentleman and his grandson.

To Jo's lively fancy this fine house seemed a kind of enchanted palace, full of splendours and delights, which no one enjoyed. She had long wanted to behold these hidden glories, and to know the "Laurence boy," who looked as if he would like to be known, if he only knew how to begin. She had planned many ways of making friends with him; but he had not been lately seen, and Jo began to think he had gone away, when she one day spied a brown face at an upper window, looking wistfully down into their garden, where Beth and Amy were snowballing one another.

"That boy is suffering for society and fun," she said to herself. "His grandpa doesn't know what's good for him, and keeps him shut up all alone. He needs a lot of jolly boys to play with, or somebody young and lively. I've a great mind to go over and tell the old gentleman so."

The idea amused Jo, who liked to do daring things, and was always scandalising Meg by her queer performances. The plan of "going over" was not forgotten; and, when the snowy afternoon came, Jo resolved to try what could be done. She saw Mr. Laurence drive off, and then sallied out to dig her way down to the hedge, where she paused

and took a survey. All quiet ; curtains down at the lower windows ; servants out of sight, and nothing human visible but a curly black head leaning on a thin hand at the upper window.

"There he is," thought Jo ; "poor boy ! all alone, and sick, this dismal day ! It's a shame ! I'll toss up a snowball and make him look out, and then say a kind word to him."

Up went a handful of soft snow, and the head turned at once, showing a face which lost its listless look in a minute, as the big eyes brightened and the mouth began to smile. Jo nodded and laughed and flourished her broom as she called out,—

"How do you do ? Are you sick ?"

Laurie opened the window, and croaked out as hoarsely as a raven,—

"Better, thank you. I've had a horrid cold, and been shut up a week."

"I'm sorry. What do you amuse yourself with ?"

"Nothing ; it's as dull as tombs up here."

"Don't you read ?"

"Not much ; they won't let me."

"Can't somebody read to you ?"

"Grandpa does sometimes ; but my books don't interest him, and I hate to ask my tutor."

"Have some one come and see you, then."

"There isn't any one I'd like to see. Boys make such a row, and my head is weak."

"Isn't there some nice girl who'd read and amuse you? Girls are quiet, and like to play nurse."

"Don't know any."

"You know me," began Jo, then laughed, and stopped.

"So I do! Will you come, please?" cried Laurie.

"I'm not quiet and nice; but I'll come, if mother will let me. I'll go and ask her. Shut that window, like a good boy, and wait till I come."

With that Jo shouldered her broom and marched into the house, wondering what they would all say to her. Laurie was in a little flutter of excitement at the idea of having company, and flew about to get ready; for, as Mrs. March said, he was "a little gentleman," and did honour to the coming guest by brushing his curly pate, putting on a fresh collar, and trying to tidy up the room, which, in spite of half a dozen servants, was anything but neat. Presently there came a loud ring, then a decided voice asking for "Mr. Laurie," and a surprised-looking servant came running up to announce a young lady.

"All right, show her up, it's Miss Jo," said Laurie, going to the door of his little parlour to meet

Jo, who appeared, looking rosy and kind, and quite at her ease, with a covered dish in one hand and Beth's three kittens in the other.

"Here I am, bag and baggage," she said briskly. "Mother sent her love, and was glad if I could do anything for you. Meg wanted me to bring some of her blanc-mange—she makes it very nice; and Beth thought her cats would be comforting. I knew you'd shout at them, but I couldn't refuse, she was so anxious to do something."

It so happened that Beth's funny loan was just the thing, for, in laughing over the kits, Laurie forgot his bashfulness, and grew sociable at once.

"That looks too pretty to eat," he said, smiling with pleasure, as Jo uncovered the dish, and showed the blanc-mange, surrounded by a garland of green leaves, and the scarlet flowers of Amy's pet geranium.

"It isn't anything, only they all felt kindly, and wanted to show it. Tell the girl to put it away for your tea: it's so simple, you can eat it; and, being soft, it will slip down without hurting your sore throat. What a cosy room this is!"

"It might be, if it was kept nice; but the maids are lazy, and I don't know how to make them mind. It worries me, though."

"I'll right it up in two minutes, for it only needs to have the hearth brushed, so; and the things

stood straight on the mantelpiece, so ; and the books put here, and the bottles there, and your sofa turned from the light, and the pillows plumped up a bit. Now, then, you're fixed."

And so he was, for, as she laughed and talked, Jo had whisked things into place, and given quite a different air to the room. Laurie watched her in respectful silence ; and, when she beckoned him to his sofa, he sat down with a sigh of satisfaction, saying gratefully,—

" How kind you are ! Yes, that's what it wanted. Now, please take the big chair, and let me do something to amuse my company."

" No ; I came to amuse you. Shall I read aloud ? " and Jo looked affectionately toward some inviting books near by.

" Thank you ; I've read all those, and if you don't mind, I'd rather talk," answered Laurie.

" Not a bit ; I'll talk all day, if you'll only set me going. Beth says I never know when to stop."

" Is Beth the rosy one who stays at home a good deal, and sometimes goes out with a little basket ? " asked Laurie, with interest.

" Yes, that's Beth ; she's my girl, and a regular good one she is, too."

" The pretty one is Meg, and the curly-haired one is Amy, I believe ? "

"How did you find that out?"

Laurie coloured up, but answered frankly, "Why, you see, I often hear you calling to one another, and when I'm alone up here, I can't help looking over at your house, you always seem to be having such good times. I beg your pardon for being so rude, but sometimes you forget to put down the curtain at the window where the flowers are; and when the lamps are lighted, it's like looking at a picture, to see the fire, and you all round the table with your mother; her face is right opposite, and it looks so sweet behind the flowers, I can't help watching it. I haven't got any mother, you know." And Laurie poked the fire to hide a little twitching of the lips that he could not control.

The solitary, hungry look in his eyes went straight to Jo's warm heart. She had been so simply taught that there was no nonsense in her head, and at fifteen she was as innocent and frank as any child. Laurie was sick and lonely; and, feeling how rich she was in home love and happiness, she gladly tried to share it with him. Her brown face was very friendly, and her sharp voice unusually gentle, as she said,—

"We'll never draw that curtain any more, and I give you leave to look as much as you like. I just wish, though, instead of peeping, you'd come over

and see us. Mother is so splendid, she'd do you heaps of good, and Beth would sing to you if I begged her to, and Amy would dance ; Meg and I would make you laugh over our funny stage properties and we'd have jolly times. Wouldn't your grandpa let you ? ”

“ I think he would, if your mother asked him. He's very kind, though he don't look it ; and he lets me do what I like, pretty much, only he's afraid I might be a bother to strangers,” began Laurie, brightening more and more.

“ We ain't strangers, we are neighbours, and you needn't think you'd be a bother. We *want* to know you, and I've been trying to do it this ever so long. We haven't been here a great while, you know, but we have got acquainted with all our neighbours but you.”

L. M. ALCOTT.

THE AWFUL FATE OF MR. WOLF¹

UNCLE REMUS was half-soling one of his shoes, and his Miss Sally's little boy had been handling his awls, his hammers, and his knives to such an extent that the old man was compelled to assume a threatening

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attitude ; but peace reigned again, and the little boy perched himself on a chair, watching Uncle Remus driving in pegs.

" Fokes w'at's allers pesterin' people, en bodderin' 'longer dat w'at ain't dern, don't never come ter no good een'. Dar wuz Brer Wolf ; stidder mindin' un his own bizness, he hatter take en go in partnerships wid Brer Fox, en dey wan't skasely a minnit in de day dat he wan't atter Brer Rabbit, en he kep' on en kep' on twel fus' news you know'd he got kotch up wid—en he got kotch up with monstus bad."

" Goodness, Uncle Remus ! I thought the Wolf let the Rabbit alone, after he tried to fool him about the Fox being dead."

" Better lemme tell dish yer my way. Bimeby hit'll be yo' bedtime, en Miss Sally 'll be a-holler'n atter you, en you'll be a-whimplin' rouin', en den Marse John 'll fetch up de re'r wid dat ar strop w'at I made fer 'im."

The child laughed, and playfully shook his fist in the simple, serious face of the venerable old darkey, but said no more. Uncle Remus waited awhile to be sure there was to be no other demonstration, and then proceeded :—

" Brer Rabbit ain't see no peace w'atsumever. He can't leave home 'cep' Brer Wolf 'ud make a raid

en tote off some er de fambly. Brer Rabbit b'ilt 'im a straw house, en hit wuz tored down ; den he made a house outen pine-tops, en dat went de same way ; den de made 'im a bark house, en dat wuz raided on ; en eve'y time he los' a house he los' wunner his chilluns. Las' Brer Rabbit got mad, he did, en cust, en den he went off, he did, en got some kyarpinters, en dey b'ilt 'im a plank house wid rock foundashuns.

" Atter dat he could have some peace en quietness. He could go out en pass de time er day wid his nabers, en come back en set by de fier, en smoke his pipe, en read de newspapers same like enny man w'at got a fambly. He made a hole, he did, in de cellar whar de little Rabbits could hide out w'en dar wuz much uv a racket in de naberhood, en de latch er de front do' kotch on de inside. Brer Wolf, he see how de lan' lay, he did, en he lay low. De little Rabbits wuz mighty skittish, but hit got so dat cole chills ain't run up Brer Rabbit's back no mo' w'en he heerd Brer Wolf go gallopin' by.

" Bimeby, one day w'en Brer Rabbit wuz fixin' fer ter call on Miss Coon, he heerd a monstus fuss en clatter up de big road, en 'mos' 'fo' he could fix his years fer ter lissen, Brer Wolf run in de do'. De little Rabbits dey went inter dere hole in de cellar, dey did, like blowin' out a canngle. Brer

Wolf wuz ar'ly kivver'd wid mud, en mighty nigh outer win'.

" ' Oh, do pray save me, Brer Rabbit ! ' sez Brer Wolf, sezee. ' Do please, Brer Rabbit ! de dogs is atter me, en dey'll t'ar me up. Don't you year um comin' ? Oh, do please save me, Brer Rabbit ! Hide me some'rs whar de dogs won't git me.'

" No quicker sed dan done.

" ' Jump in dat big chist dar, Brer Wolf,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee ; ' jump in dar en make yo'se'f at home.'

" In jump Brer Wolf, down come de lid, en inter de hasp went de hook, en dar Mr. Wolf wuz. Den Brer Rabbit went ter de lookin'-glass, he did, en wink at hisse'f ; en den he drawd de rockin'-cheer in front er de fier, he did, en tuck a big chaw terbarker."

" Tobacco, Uncle Remus ? " asked the little boy incredulously.

" Rabbit terbarker, honey. You know dis yer life ev'lastin' w'at Miss Sally puts 'mong de cloze in de trunk ; well, dat's rabbit terbarker. Den Brer Rabbit sot dar long time, he did, turnin' his mine over en wukken his thinkin' masheen. Bimeby he got up, en sorter stir 'roun'. Den Brer Wolf open up,—

" ' Is de dogs all gone, Brer Rabbit ? '

" ' Seem like I hear one un um smellin' roun' de chimbly-cornder des now.'

" Den Brer Rabbit git de kittle en fill it full er water, en put it on de fier.

" ' W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit ? '

" ' I'm fixin' fer ter make you a nice cup er tea, Brer Wolf.'

" Den Brer Rabbit went ter de cubberd en git de gimlet, en commence fer ter bo' little holes in de chist-led.

" ' W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit ? '

" ' I'm a-bo'in' little holes so you kin git breff, Brer Wolf.'

" Den Brer Rabbit went out en git some mo' wood, en fling it on de fier.

" ' W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit ? '

" ' I'm a-chunkin' up der fier so you won't git cole, Brer Wolf.'

" Den Brer Rabbit went down inter de cellar en fotchi out all his chilluns.

" ' W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit ? '

" ' I'm a-tellin' my chilluns w'at a nice man you is, Brer Wolf.'

" En de chilluns, dey had ter put der han's on der moufs fer ter keep fum laffin'. Den Brer Rabbit he got de kittle en commenced fer to po' de hot water on de chist-led.

" ' W'at dat I hear, Brer Rabbit ? '
 " ' You hear de wind a-blowin', Brer Wolf.'
 " Den de water began fer ter sif' thoo.
 " ' W'at dat I feel, Brer Rabbit ? '
 " ' You feels de fleas a-bitin', Brer Wolf.'
 " ' Dey er bitin' mighty hard, Brer Rabbit.'
 " ' Tu'n over on de udder side, Brer Wolf.'
 " ' W'at dat I feel now, Brer Rabbit ? '
 " ' Still you feels de fleas, Brer Wolf.'
 " ' Dey er eatin' me up, Brer Rabbit ; ' en dem
 wuz de las' words er Brer Wolf, kaze the scaldin'
 water done de bizness.
 " Den Brer Rabbit call in his nabers, he did, en
 dey hilt a reg'lar juberlee ; en ef yer go ter Brer
 Rabbit's house right now, I dunno but w'at you'll
 find Brer Wolf's hide hangin' in de back-po'ch, en
 all bekase he wuz so bizzy wid udder fokes's doin's."

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

LETTERS FROM "YOUR OWN DADDY"

(To his youngest daughter, from Biarritz)

MY DARLING MARY—I am going to write you a
 long letter about all sorts of things. And first, this
 place is full of the prettiest children I ever saw, very
 like English, but with dark hair and eyes ; and so

nicely dressed, with striped stockings, which they knit themselves, and Basque shoes, made of canvas, worked with red and purple worsted.

All the children go to a school kept by nuns ; and I am sure the nuns are very kind to them, for they laugh and romp, it seems to me, all day long. In summer most of them wear no shoes or stockings, for they do not want them ; but in winter they are wrapt up warm ; and I have not seen one ragged child or tramp, or any one who looks miserable.

They never wear any bonnets. The little babies wear a white cap, and the children a woollen cap with pretty colours, and the girls a smart handkerchief on their back hair, and the boys and men wear blue and scarlet caps like Scotsmen, just the shape of mushrooms, and a red sash.

The oxen here are quite yellow, and so gentle and wise, the men make them do exactly what they like. I will draw you an ox-cart when I come home. The banks here are covered with enormous canes, as high as the eaves of our house. They tie one of these to a fir pole, and make a huge long rod and then go and sit on the rocks and fish for dorados, which are fish with gilt heads.

There are the most lovely sweet-smelling purple pinks on the rocks here, and the woods are full of asphodel, great lilies, four feet high, with white and

purple flowers. I saw the wood yesterday where the dreadful fight was between the French and English—and over the place where all the great men lay buried grew one great flower-bed of asphodel. So they "slept in the meads of asphodel" like the old Greek heroes of Homer.

There were great "lords and ladies" (arums) there, growing in the bank, twice as big as ours, and not red, but white and primrose—most beautiful.

You cannot think how beautiful the commons are, they are like flower gardens, golden with furze, and white with *potentilla*, and crimson with sweet-smelling *Daphne*, and blue with the most wonderful blue flower which grows everywhere. I have dried them all.

Tell your darling mother I am quite well, and will write to her to-morrow. There, that is all I have to say. Tell Grenville they have made a tunnel under the battle-field, for the railroad to go into Spain, and that on the top of the tunnel there is a shaft, and a huge wheel, to pump air into the tunnel, and that I will bring him home a scarlet Basque cap, and you and Rose Basque shoes.

"YOUR OWN DADDY."

(*To his youngest boy, from Pau*)

MY DEAR LITTLE MAN—I was quite delighted to get a letter from you so nicely written. Yesterday I went by the railway to a most beautiful place, where I am staying now—a town with an old castle, hundreds of years old, where the great King Henry IV. of France was born, and his cradle is there still, made of a huge tortoise-shell.

Underneath the castle are beautiful walks and woods—all green, as if it was summer, and roses and flowers, and birds singing—but different from our English birds. But it is quite summer here because it is so far south.

Under the castle, by the river, are frogs that make a noise like a rattle, and frogs that bark like toy-dogs, and frogs that climb up trees, and even up the window-panes—they have suckers on their feet, and are quite green like a leaf.

Far away beyond the castle are the great mountains, ten thousand feet high, covered with snow, and the clouds crawling about their tops. I am going to see them to-morrow, and when I come back I will tell you. But I have been out to-night, and all the frogs are croaking still, and making a horrid noise.

Mind and be a good boy and give Nurse my love.

There is a vulture here in the inn, but he is a little Egyptian vulture, not like the great vulture I saw at Bayonne. Ask Mother to show you his picture in the beginning of the bird book. He is an ugly fellow, who eats dead horses and sheep. There is his picture.—Your own Daddy,

“ C. KINGSLEY.”

(*To his youngest daughter, from Abergeldie Castle*)

MY MARY— This is the real castle where I am, and in the bottom of that tower a real witch was locked up before she was burnt on Craig-na-Ban, overhead.

At the back of the house, under my window, which is in the top of the tower, the Dee is roaring, and the salmon are *not* leaping, and a darling water-ouzel, with a white breast, is diving after caddises. As soon as I have had luncheon I am going to fish with two dear little girls, who catch lots of trout with a fly ; and a real gillie in a kilt, who, when he and I caught a salmon two days ago, celebrated the event by putting on his Prince of Wales's tartan and uniform, taking an enormous bagpipe, and booming like an elephantine bumble-bee all round the dinner-table, and then all about the house.

It is very pleasant—like a dream—real stags in

the forest looking at you, and real grouse and black-cock, and real princesses walking about ; but I long to be home again with you all, and that is the truth. Love to Rose, and tell her to write to me at Aboyne. Your affectionate pater,

"C. K."

KINDNESS AND COLD WATER

AND now, my dear little man, what should we learn from this parable ? ¹

We should learn thirty-seven or thirty-nine things, I am not exactly sure which, but one thing, at least, we may learn, and that is this—when we see efts in the pond, never to throw stones at them, or catch them with crooked pins, or put them into vivariums with stickle-backs, that the stickle-backs may prick them in their poor little stomachs, and make them jump out of the glass into somebody's workbox, and so come to a bad end. For these efts are nothing else but the water-babies who are stupid and dirty, and will not learn their lessons and keep themselves clean, and, therefore (as comparative anatomists will tell you fifty years hence, though they are not learned enough to tell you now), their

¹ *The Water-Babies*, by Charles Kingsley.

skulls grow flat, their jaws grow out, and their brains grow small, and their tails grow long, and they lose all their ribs (which I am sure you would not like to do), and their skins grow dirty and spotted, and they never get into the clear rivers, much less into the great wide sea, but hang about in dirty ponds, and live in the mud, and eat worms, as they deserve to do.

But that is no reason why you should ill-use them, but only why you should pity them, and be kind to them, and hope that some day they will wake up and be ashamed of their nasty, dirty, lazy, stupid life, and try to amend, and become something better *once more*. For, perhaps, if they do so, then after 379,423 years, nine months, thirteen days, two hours, and twenty-one minutes (for aught that appears to the contrary), if they work very hard and wash very hard all that time, their brains may grow bigger, and their jaws grow smaller, and their ribs come back, and their tails wither off, and they will turn into water-babies again, and perhaps after that into land-babies, and after perhaps into grown men.

You know they won't? Very well, I daresay you know best. But you see, some folks have a great liking for those poor little efts. They never did anybody any harm, or could if they tried, and

their only fault is that they do no good any more than some thousands of their betters. But what with ducks, and what with pike, and what with stickle-backs, and what with water-beetles, and what with naughty boys, they are "sae sair hadden doun," as the Scotsmen say, that it is a wonder how they live ; and some folks can't help hoping, with good Bishop Butler, that they may have another chance to make things fair and even, somewhere, somewhen, somehow.

Meanwhile, do you learn your lessons, and thank God that you have plenty of cold water to wash in ; and wash in it too, like a true Englishman. And then, if my story is not true, something better is ; and if I am not quite right, still you will be, as long as you stick to hard work and cold water.

A CHIPPEWA LEGEND

THE old Chief, feeling now well-nigh his end,
 Called his two eldest children to his side,
 And gave them, in few words, his parting charge !
 " My son and daughter, me ye see no more ;
 The happy hunting-grounds await me, green
 With change of spring and summer through the
 year :

But, for remembrance, after I am gone,
Be kind to little Sheemah for my sake :
Weakling he is and young, and knows not yet
To set the trap or draw the seasoned bow ;
Therefore of both your loves he hath more need,
And he, who needeth love, to love hath right ;
It is not like our furs and stores of corn,
Whereto we claim sole title by our toil,
But the Great Spirit plants it in our hearts,
And waters it, and gives it sun, to be
The common stock and heritage of all :
Therefore be kind to Sheemah, that yourselves
May not be left deserted in your need.”

Alone beside a lake their wigwam stood,
Far from the other dwellings of their tribe ;
And, after many moons, the loneliness
Wearied the elder brother, and he said,
“ Why should I dwell here far from men, shut out
From the free, natural joys that fit my age ?
Lo, I am tall and strong, well skilled to hunt,
Patient of toil and hunger, and not yet
Have seen the danger which I dared not look
Full in the face ; what hinders me to be
A mighty Brave and Chief among my kin ? ”
So, taking up his arrows and his bow,
As if to hunt, he journeyed swiftly on,

Until he gained the wigwams of his tribe,
Where, choosing out a bride, he soon forgot,
In all the fret and bustle of new life,
The little Sheemah and his father's charge.

Now when the sister found her brother gone,
And that, for many days, he came not back,
She wept for Sheemah more than for herself ;
For Love bides longest in a woman's heart,
And flutters many times before he flies,
And then doth perch so nearly, that a word
May lure him back as swift and glad as light ;
And Duty lingers even when Love is gone,
Oft looking out in hope of his return ;
And, after Duty hath been driven forth,
Then Selfishness creeps in the last of all,
Warming her lean hands at the lonely hearth,
And crouching o'er the embers to shut out
Whatever paltry warmth and light are left,
With avaricious greed, from all beside.
So for long months the sister hunted wide,
And cared for little Sheemah tenderly ;
But daily more and more the loneliness
Grew wearisome, and to herself she sighed,
“ Am I not fair ? at least the glassy pool,
That hath no cause to flatter, tells me so ;
But, oh ! how flat and meaningless the tale,

Unless it tremble on a lover's tongue !
Beauty hath no true glass, except it be
In the sweet privacy of loving eyes."
Thus deemed she idly, and forgot the lore
Which she had learned of nature and the woods,
That beauty's chief reward is to itself,
And that the eyes of Love reflect alone
The inward fairness, which is blurred and lost
Unless kept clear and white by Duty's care.
So she went forth and sought the haunts of men,
And, being wedded, in her household cares
Soon, like the elder brother, quite forgot
The little Sheemah and her father's charge.

But Sheemah, left alone within the lodge,
Waited and waited with a shrinking heart,
Thinking each rustle was his sister's step,
Till hope grew less and less, and then went out,
And every sound was changed from hope to fear.
Few sounds there were :—the dropping of a nut,
The squirrel's chirrup, and the jay's harsh scream,
Autumn's sad remnants of blithe Summer's cheer,
Heard at long intervals, seemed but to make
The dreadful void of silence sadder.
Soon what small store his sister left was gone,
And through the Autumn he made shift to live
On roots and berries, gathered in much fear

Of wolves, whose ghastly howl he heard oft-times,
Hollow and hungry, at the dead of night.
But Winter came at last, and when the snow,
Thick-heaped for gleaming leagues o'er hill and
plain,
Spread its unbroken silence over all,
Made bold by hunger, he was fain to glean
(More sick at heart than Ruth, and all alone)
After the harvest of the merciless wolf,
Grim Boaz, who, sharp-ribbed and gaunt, yet feared
A thing more wild and starving than himself ;
Till, by degrees, the wolf and he grew friends,
And shared together all the Winter through.

Late in the Spring, when all the ice was gone,
The elder brother, fishing in the lake
Upon whose edge his father's wigwam stood,
Heard a low moaning noise upon the shore :
Half like a child it seemed, half like a wolf,
And straightway there was something in his heart
That said, " It is thy brother Sheemah's voice."
So, paddling swiftly to the bank, he saw,
Within a little thicket close at hand,
A child that seemed fast changing to a wolf,
From the neck downward, gray with shaggy hair,
That still crept on and upward as he looked.
The face was turned away, but well he knew

That it was Sheemah's, even his brother's face.
Then with his trembling hands he hid his eyes,
And bowed his head, so that he might not see
The first look of his brother's eyes, and cried,
" O Sheemah ! O my brother, speak to me !
Dost thou not know me, that I am thy brother ?
Come to me, little Sheemah, thou shalt dwell
With me henceforth, and know no care or want ! "

Sheemah was silent for a space, as if
'Twere hard to summon up a human voice,
And, when he spake, the sound was as a wolf's :
" I know thee not, nor art thou what thou say'st ;
I have none other brethren than the wolves,
And, till thy heart be changed from what it is,
Thou art not worthy to be called their kin."

Then groaned the other, with a choking tongue,
" Alas ! my heart is changed right bitterly ;
'Tis shrunk and parched within me even now ! "
And, looking upward fearfully, he saw
Only a wolf that shrank away and ran,
Ugly and fierce, to hide among the woods.

J. R. LOWELL.

A PEEP INTO CAXTON'S *ÆSOP'S FABLES*

The first fable maketh mention of the fox and of the raisins

HE is not wise that desireth to have a thing which he may not have. As reciteth this fable of a fox which looked and beheld the raisins that grew upon an high vine the which raisins he much desired for to eat them.

And when he saw that none he might get he turned his sorrow into joy and said these raisins be soure and if I had some I would not eat them. And therefore this fable sheweth that he is wise which fayneth not to desire that thing the which he may not have.

There must be light in the dwelling, and brightness and pure spirits and cheerful smiles. Home is not usually the place of toil but the place to which we return and rest from our labours, in which parents and children meet together and pass a careless and joyful hour. To have nothing to say to others at such times, in any rank of life, is a very unfortunate temper of mind, and may perhaps be regarded as a serious fault; at any rate it makes a house vacant and joyless.

BENJAMIN JOWETT.

COMMENTARY

EACH prose passage in this book is meant to introduce you to an author whose books are worth reading from beginning to end. Some of the poems can be used for the same purpose, while others will be found interesting on account of their contents apart from their authorship.

You are meant to enjoy each lesson in this book, but it is not to be a lazy kind of enjoyment. You will have to think hard, do some searching amongst other books, and ask questions of people who know, if you are to get all the good which can be got out of these selections. A school reading-book like this is designed for *study*.

I am going to tell you a little in the following pages about each of the lessons in this book ; but I am not going to tell you all that you will need to know—just enough to make you wish to find out more for yourself. No doubt you have a good dictionary either in school or at home. You know also what an encyclopaedia is, and if there is not one in the school or at home there is one at the Free Library, which you ought to learn how to use. A good atlas is also useful, especially if it has history maps in it, and if you can get hold of Dr. Brewer's *Reader's Handbook* you will find it very helpful. Your school books will help you too, and you may have other books at home in which you can search out what you wish to know.

Page 11. *Ebenezer Scrooge*.—After having read the *Christmas Carol* you will probably wish to read more stories

by Charles Dickens. You will enjoy another short story entitled *The Chimes* in this author's book of "Christmas Stories," and then you might begin on *David Copperfield*, in which the author under a thin disguise tells a great deal of the very interesting story of his own life.

Page 21. *The Reapers of Lindisfarne*.—The following passage from J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People* will explain the picture on page 23.

"Never did man die of hunger who served God faithfully," Cuthbert would say, when night found them supperless in the waste. "Look at the eagle overhead! God can feed us through Him if He will," and once at least he owed his meal to a fish that the scared bird let fall.

The boy is a shepherd, as Cuthbert himself had been in his youth.

Page 25. *The Love-Master*.—This passage is taken from a dog story entitled *White Fang*, which tells of the strenuous life of Northern Canada.

Page 36. *The Defeat of Time*.—The writer of this story, Charles Lamb, wrote the *Tales from Shakespeare*, some of which you may have read. If not, it would be a good idea to get a copy of this book and read the tale entitled *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Then you may want to read Shakespeare's own play of that name, and that will be still better.

Page 46. *Going the Rounds*.—This passage is taken from a book entitled *Under the Greenwood Tree*, by Thomas Hardy, the name of which you ought to note for future reading. The book is a very careful study of the ways of rural people in the West Country, and is intended to be read very slowly.

and carefully, because all the details have been as carefully thought out and set down as in the beautiful Dutch pictures on pages 2 and 235 of this book.

Page 56. *In the Western Highlands*.—I have printed this passage partly because it shows that accounts of travel even in our own islands are as interesting as fiction when they are well written. Do not pass over good books of this kind in the library. The extract also serves to introduce you to the poet Wordsworth.

Page 70. *Wings*.—The poet mentions in the last line of the first stanza (it is really a *sonnet*) the heroine of the first part of *The Faerie Queene*, a long poem by Edmund Spenser, the story of which will interest you if you can find it told in prose in a book of *Stories from Spenser*. One of our greatest artists has shown Una in the picture on page 71.

Page 72. *From London to Stonehenge*.—The book from which this is taken is full of adventures of a similar kind, and tells the real life story of one of the most interesting of our authors. He continues his story in another book called *The Romany Rye*.

Page 85. *Baucis and Philemon*.—This poem was written by Dean Swift, who wrote *Gulliver's Travels*, to please a little girl named Hester Johnson. It is of course an old Greek story retold in a new way. You can read it in prose in Hawthorne's *Wonder-Book*, where it is entitled "The Miraculous Pitcher."

Page 89. *Miss Matty as Shop-keeper*.—How Miss Matty lost her money by the failure of a bank and had to sell her household goods and take to keeping a tea-shop is told in

Cranford, which you will, no doubt, want to read when you have studied this extract.

Page 97. *Potter Thompson*.—This is an extract from another “travel book” about our own country, and will prove specially interesting to boys and girls in Yorkshire. If you do not live in Yorkshire, you might get the *Highways and Byways* of your own district from the Public Library. The librarian will know about it.

Page 108. *An Easter Greeting*.—Of course you have read Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, but if not you are not yet too old to read them now.

Page 111. *A Simple Aquarium*.—This passage from *Glaucus or The Wonders of the Shore*, by Charles Kingsley, ought to encourage a boy or girl living at the seaside or in the country, if not to start an aquarium, at least to find and examine specimens of the creatures here named. If you are interested in these matters get the books of Edward Step from the Public Library.

Page 122. *Rhaecus*.—This story-poem explains itself. The author was an American poet from whose works, as you have no doubt noticed, I have taken other poems in this book, which you can get from any library.

Page 129. “*Exit Tyrannus*.”—The title of this selection is Latin for “The Tyrant Departs.” The story will explain itself as you go on with the reading. The rule in reading an extract is “Read on.” This passage is from *The Golden Age*, and there is more about Edward and Harold in the book, which you can get from any library.

Page 136. *St. Martin*.—The story of St. Martin is charmingly told in Mrs. J. H. Ewing’s *The Story of a Short Life*, a tale of a brave cripple. Get this book if you can.

Page 137. *To a Pine-Tree*.—These verses are not smooth reading. Read them aloud and very carefully. A *sachem* is a chieftain.

Page 139. *Out of Doors in February*.—This is from the author's book of essays entitled *The Open Air*, and deals with the English country-side. We shall read later a companion extract which treats of America (see p. 243). There is a music in language, but you cannot hear or test it unless you read aloud and very slowly, sounding each sentence again and again to see if there is any melody in it. Sometimes a sentence does not "sing," and when you feel it jar upon the ear you have taken a great step towards real appreciation of the music of language. There are occasional sentences in this extract that do not please the ear, which is a pity, for the thoughts expressed are very beautiful and worthy of the choicest form of words.

Page 159. *A Dutch Family*.—This passage is from the first chapter of one of the finest and most interesting historical stories that were ever written, a book which you must carefully note for future reading. It is entitled *The Cloister and the Hearth*, and deals with the time when the Invention of Printing was causing a great stir in Europe and threatening the livelihood of numerous scribes, copyists and artists. But the tale is not only about these matters; it is full of adventure, hair-breadth escapes and continuous action. Some day you will thank me for introducing you to this book; but read it carefully.

Page 164. *Christmas Morning*.—This is a description of an English Christmas morning in the time of our great-grandfathers, taken from *Old Christmas*, by the American writer, Washington Irving, who wrote the story of *Rip Van*

Winkle. You ought to read the first part of *Old Christmas* to help you to enjoy this passage more completely.

Page 182. *The Holly*.—The author of this poem was Vicar of Morwenstow in North Cornwall and wrote a book called *Footprints of Former Men in Far Cornwall*, which you may like to read some day. “Aunt Mary” means the Virgin Mary.

Page 184. *A Fairy Tale*.—There are some “guessing stories” for you in this poem, some of which you will never guess nor does it matter. Who Mr. Birkbeck was I do not know! You can read the story of *The White Cat* in Mrs. Craik’s *Fairy Book*, also that of *Riquet with the Tuft*. The word *nous* is Greek for “understanding.”

Page 192. *Hannah Bint*.—This extract from Miss M. R. Mitford’s *Our Village* is intended to show you how you can sometimes find tales in volumes which are not “story-books,” as you understand the word. Test these sentences by reading them aloud. Some of them *are* rather long! But each is full of thought and worthy of careful study.

Page 207. *Heracles and Hylas*.—The name Heracles is the Greek form of the better-known Hercules. This passage describes an incident which occurred on Jason’s Quest of the Golden Fleece, in which Hercules joined. See Charles Kingsley’s *The Heroes*. Read this extract very slowly, for every word is precious, and whole sentences can easily be committed to memory, e.g. in paragraph 1 from “Never was he apart” to “measure of man.” Hercules was the son of Alcmene (three syllables and each *e* long).

Page 211. *Grace for Light*.—There is a single word in the last stanza of this lovely poem which will show you to which country the piece refers.

Page 213. *Our Village*.—The “cage” and the “stocks” referred to used to be employed for law-breakers.

Page 219. *The Trouble-Hunters*.—This chapter is taken from *Scribner's Magazine*, and is included in this book to show you how interesting a good magazine article, which is not “a story,” may be, and what a great deal can be learnt from it.

Page 234. *The Prior*.—You will enjoy reading *The Child's Book of Saints* from which this short and very beautiful passage is taken.

Page 236. *Don José's Mule, Jacintha*.—The “Quixotic spirit” spoken of on page 237 refers to the Spanish story of *Don Quixote*, by the great writer Cervantes, which has been translated into English and can be obtained at any library.

Page 242. *Sir Isumbras at the Ford*.—Sir Isumbras was a knight of the Middle Ages who was very proud and haughty. So God sent trouble upon him which made him so humble and patient that one day he carried the children of a poor wood-cutter across a swollen ford on his great war-horse.

Page 243. *Winter Animals*.—The book from which this passage is taken is entitled *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, was written by Henry David Thoreau, and begins thus :

When I wrote the following pages, or rather, the bulk of them, I lived alone in the woods, a mile from any neighbour, in a house which I had built myself on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labour of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months.

Page 258. *Tales from Old Japan*.—You may think that you are past the fairy-tale age, but it comes a second time

when you begin to take interest in the fairy or "folk" tales of a country, as showing you what the people of that country are like, and how their stories resemble some of ours.

Page 267. *The Village Damsel*.—Books of travel afford a welcome change from story-books, and this passage from a book called *North Italian Folk* is a good sample of this class of reading. *Dolce far niente* is Italian meaning "delicious idleness."

Page 286. *Being Neighbourly*.—This extract is from that jolly girls' story (which many boys have also enjoyed) entitled *Little Women*, which deals with American life about fifty years ago.

Page 294. *The Awful Fate of Mr. Wolf*.—This is from *Uncle Remus*, which contains animal stories of the negroes who were taken from Africa to North America to work on the plantations. Read it aloud and then the dialect will not be so difficult.

Page 299. *Letters from "Your own Daddy."*—There are many interesting library books which are known as "biographies" and "memoirs." These letters are from a book of this kind entitled, *Charles Kingsley : his Letters and Memories of his Life*.

Page 312. *A Peep into Caxton's "Æsop's Fables."*—We conclude with an interesting little extract from one of the first books printed in England.

THE END

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